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ABSTRACT

An Indian view of India and the world is presented in this book, which is the second of two volumes intended for use with secondary and college level students. The reality of everyday life as experienced by the Indian people is recreated in the series. Almost all of the material in both volumes has been written by Indians and has been taken from a variety of sources: autobiographies, fiction, poetry, newspaper and magazine articles, and historical documents. Each primary source selection is preceded by an editor's introduction which provides background information and a few questions for class discussion. Volume two deals with the topic of nation building, discussing such issues as Hindu-Muslim relations, the impact of British colonial rule, and the influence of Mahatma Gandhi on the independence movement. The last section of the book examines the broad areas of national unity, political philosophy, and economic development. It includes material on the language question, the Indian constitution and parliamentary system, agriculture, and industrialization. The interaction of tradition and change underlies the entire volume. (Author/RM)

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THROUGH INDIAN EYES

Volume 2

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Forging a Nation

Revised Edition

DONALD J. JOHNSON
and
JEAN E. JOHNSON

LEON E. CLARK General Editor

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LEON E. CLARK
DONALD J. JOHNSON
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Foreword

PEOPLE—AND NATIONS—have a tendency to look at the outside world from their own perspectives. This is natural and perhaps necessary, for we are all prisoners of a particular space and time. But how limited and boring one perspective can be! And how faulty and biased our information would be if we listened only to ourselves!

The main goal of *Through Indian Eyes* is to broaden our perspective by presenting an Indian view of India and the world. Almost all of the material in these two books has been written by Indians, and it comes from a variety of sources: autobiographies, fiction, poetry, newspaper and magazine articles, religious texts, and historical documents.

Unlike most books about "other peoples," *Through Indian Eyes* does not try to *explain* India but to *show* it; it does not offer "expert" analysis by outside observers but, rather, attempts to recreate the reality of everyday life as experienced by the Indian people. Interpretation is left to the reader. In effect, *Through Indian Eyes* has two objectives: to let the Indians speak for themselves, and to let readers think for themselves.

Volume 1, "The Wheel of Life," focuses on the most personal aspects of Indian life: family relations, marriage, caste membership, and religious beliefs. A special effort has been

made to show the integration of Hindu beliefs and everyday life.

Volume 2, "Forging a Nation," moves to the larger circle of nation-building, dealing with such issues as Hindu-Muslim relations, the impact of British colonial rule, and the influence of Mahatma Gandhi on the independence movement. The last section of the book examines the broad areas of national unity, political philosophy and economic development; it includes material on the "language question," the Indian constitution and parliamentary system, and agriculture and industrialization. The interaction of tradition and change underlies the entire volume.

In some ways, India may seem different from the United States, and indeed it is. But in many more ways, the Indians as people are similar to people anywhere in the world. Human beings, no matter where they live, face the same basic needs: to eat, to work, to love, to play, to get along with other people and with their environments. Learning how the Indians respond to these needs may teach us something useful for our own lives.

More importantly, getting to know the Indians as people—sharing in their thoughts and feelings, their beliefs, and aspirations—should help us to develop a sense of empathy, a feeling of identity, with human beings everywhere. In the end we should know more about ourselves—indeed, we should have an expanded definition of who we are—because we will know more about the common humanity that all people share. Self-knowledge is the ultimate justification for studying about other people.

LEON E. CLARK

Introduction

This volume of *Through Indian Eyes* focusses on the challenge of creating a unified nation out of a diverse population of almost 700 million people. More than 5,000 years of Indian history have created a land of striking contrasts in religious beliefs, cultural practices, economic status and language. The ultimate challenge of Indian nation-building is how to design a national policy that unites diverse people, provides equal opportunity for all segments of society, and at the same time preserves the richness of cultural variety.

Volume 1 of *Through Indian Eyes* concentrated on the Hindu way of life, exploring the concepts of *dharma* and *karma* and the values of group affiliation, caste identity and the reliance on intuitive knowledge. Such values are shared by 85 percent of all Indians and have formed the core of Indian civilization for thousands of years. But two other influences—the Muslim religion and European culture—have also helped to shape the present Indian reality. The Turkish Muslims dominated India from approximately 1200 A.D. to 1700 A.D. and the British maintained colonial rule from 1803 to 1947. Such extended control is bound to leave a lasting impression.

All nations are built on their past and the values that have developed over centuries of accumulated experience. In India the past includes Hindu, Muslim and European influences with the result that not all Indians share the same historical identity. Indian Muslims often look on Indian Hindus as fundamentally

different; Indians trained by the British may seek a separate identity from either of these two groups yet claim to be just as Indian. Such pluralism presents special challenges to nation builders whose goal is to create a single national identity out of diverse groups of people.

One anthropologist has called identity based on one's ethnic, religious, or regional loyalties "primordial sentiment." Americans are quite familiar with "primordial sentiment." Movements in support of Black, Hispanic or Native American demands grow out of cultural consciousness. And Canada's attempt to reconcile the demands of both French- and English-speaking citizens parallels India's search for a common national language. In short India, like the U.S. and Canada and many other nations, is trying to mold a nation which unites groups of differing "primordial sentiments."

Mark Twain, who traveled to India in 1896, was impressed with the immensity and diversity of the land. He wrote:

> This is indeed India; the land of dreams and romance, of fabulous wealth and fabulous poverty, of splendor and rags, of palaces and hovels, of famine and pestilence, of genii and giants and Aladdin lamps, of tigers and elephants, the cobra and the jungle, the country of a hundred nations and hundred tongues, of a thousand religions and two million gods, cradle of the human race, birthplace of human speech, mother of history, grandmother of legend, great-grandmother of tradition, whose yesterdays bear date with the mouldering antiquities of the rest of the nations—the one sole country under the sun that is endowed with an imperishable interest for alien prince and alien peasant, for lettered and ignorant, wise and fool, rich and poor, bond and free, the one land that *all* men desire to see, and having seen once, by even a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for the shows of all the rest of the globe combined.*

From India's long history, we have chosen to focus here on two periods: the era of Muslim control, from approximatey A.D. 1200 to 1700, and the time of British colonial rule, from 1803 to 1947. Both of these periods have certain similarities to America's past. As we look at Hindu-Muslim relations through history, and especially in 1947, when the subcontinent was divided into the two nations of India and Pakistan, we may be reminded of the

*Mark Twain, *Following the Equator* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1899), p. 26.

Civil War in the United States, which threatened to split our nation in two. We may also think of more recent social and religious conflicts, such as the Protestant-Catholic struggle in Northern Ireland, the Turkish-Greek issue in Cyprus, and the Arab-Israeli war in the Middle East.

When we examine the period of British colonialism, we may recall that the United States once shared with India a common foreign ruler—Great Britain. Foreign rulers are generally not welcome for long, and both India and the North American colonies fought the British for independence. As a result of the centuries of British rule in India, a visitor there today sees traces of English influence all around him. The same is true of North America. India and the United States have similarities in government structure, similar constitutions, and a common language. Even before the arrival of the British, India and America were interlocked in history: Columbus was looking for India when he stumbled on the "New World." And at the Boston Tea Party, it was Indian tea, imported by the British East India Company, that was thrown into Boston Harbor.

Our own war for independence, fought two hundred years ago, is now a part of "ancient" history; no one is alive today to tell first-hand what it was like to struggle for freedom. But India's "war" for independence is still fresh in the minds of many people living today—anyone over the age of thirty-five, in fact.

Although the Indian nationalist movement reminds us in some ways of the efforts of the American colonies to become a nation, the differences between the two independence movements are also important. The American colonies fought an eight-year war, using muskets and gunpowder to defeat the British. India struggled much longer, almost thirty years, and used the weapon of nonviolent protest. How could a nonviolent approach defeat the world's largest empire? One answer lies in the unique qualities of Mahatma Gandhi, the man who led the peaceful struggle in India. In reading about Gandhi's methods, you may think about the roles played by Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington in the American battle for independence. Is there one best method of protest? Is violence inevitable? Is nonviolent protest practical?

India led the way to independence for more than half the world's population in the twentieth century. India was the first colony of a European country to gain independence in this century. As a result, it became a symbol and a source of inspiration for scores of other nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. By 1967, twenty years after India had won freedom, more than sixty nations throughout the world had become independent.

Winning freedom is one thing, but forging a viable united nation is quite another. Modern India is attempting to encourage the transfer of regional loyalties to the larger nation. At the same time it is striving to meet the challenge of economic development. Beset by food scarcity, illiteracy, and overpopulation, India faces the enormous task of improving the material well-being of XXX million people—through democratic means rather than compulsion.

Beyond the issue of economic development is the larger question of the importance of material progress in the lives of people. Is economic progress mankind's highest goal? In recent years, many Westerners have come to realize that wealth, as well as poverty, involves problems. Unlimited industrial growth may, in fact, destroy the species. If we are willing to look beyond the statistics on gross national product and life expectancy, India may have something to say to us about the quality of life. All nations live on a single planet; none has a monopoly on the good life or on Truth.

What Is India?

Editors' Introduction: Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1962) was India's first prime minister and one of modern India's greatest leaders. His daughter, Indira Gandhi, is the current prime minister of India.

Born into a wealthy Brahmin family, Nehru received his high school and college education in England where he was greatly influence by western ideas and science, democracy and socialism. On his return to India in 1912 he began the practice of law, like his father, but soon turned his attention to India's struggle for independence from British rule. Often called a man of two worlds, Nehru attempted to reconcile western ideas with the established values of the Indian tradition, always drawing on India's past for his inspiration.

In 1929 at age 35 Nehru was elected president of the Indian National Congress, the political organization that fought for India's freedom. Between 1930–36 he spent most of his time in jail for leading civil disobedience campaigns. During World War II he opposed giving aid to the British, because of their refusal to give India independence, and was jailed once again.

In 1947, when India finally won its independence, Nehru became prime minister and held that post until his death in 1962. In an interview in 1954, Nehru said of himself:

> If any people choose to think of me then, I should like them to say: 'This was a man who with all his mind and heart loved India and the Indian people. And they, in turn, were indulgent to him and gave him their love most abundantly and extravagantly. (*The Statesman*, Jan. 21, 1954)

J. Nehru, *Indian, Today and Tomorrow*, Orient Longmans, New Delhi, 1960, pp. 4–6.

The following selection, written by Nehru in 1960, raises questions about India's identity and future. The underlying theme of the essay is the tension between traditional Indian values and modern forces for change. This tension is also central to the overall theme of this volume.

As you read this selection, ask yourself: What part of India's past does Nehru feel sustains the hope of its people. What challenges does India face?

WHAT IS INDIA? THAT IS A QUESTION WHICH HAS COME BACK again and again to my mind, and in my own amateurish way I sought a reply to it in her past and in the present. The early beginnings of our history filled me with wonder. It was the past of a virile and vigorous race with a questing spirit, an urge for free inquiry and, even in its earliest known period, giving evidence of a mature and tolerant civilization. Accepting life and its joys and burdens, it was ever searching for the ultimate and the universal. It built up a magnificent language, Sanskrit, and through this language and its art and architecture, it sent its vibrant message to far countries. It produced the Upanishads, the Gita and the Buddha.

Hardly any language in the world has played that vital part in the history of a race which Sanskrit has. It was not only the vehicle of the highest thought and some of the finest literature, but it became the uniting bond for India, even though there were political divisions. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata were woven into the texture of millions of lives in every generation for thousands of years. I have often wondered that if our race forgot the Buddha, the Upanishads and the great epics, what then will it be like? It would be uprooted and would lose the basic characteristics which have clung to it and given it distinction throughout these long ages. India would cease to be India.

Gradually deterioration set in, thought lost its freshness and became stale, the vitality and exuberance of youth gave place to crabbed age. Instead of the spirit of adventure there came lifeless routines, and the broad and exciting vision of the world was cabined and confined and lost in caste divisions, narrow social customs and ceremonials. Even so, India was vital enough to absorb the streams of people that flowed in to her mighty ocean

of humanity, and she never quite forgot the thoughts that had stirred her in the days of her youthful vigour.

Subsequently, India was powerfully influenced by the coming of Islam and Muslim invasions. Western colonial powers followed, bringing a new type of domination, a new colonialism and, at the same time, the impact of fresh ideas and of the industrial civilization that was growing up in Europe. This period culminated, after a long struggle, in independence and now we face the future with all this burden of the past upon us and the confused dreams and stirrings of the future that we seek to build. We have all these ages represented in us and in our country today. Organized power and energy are the symbols of the modern age. We have the growth of nuclear science in India and atomic energy, and we also have the cow-dung age. Thus every century is represented in this country and, in addition, there is enormous variety. Behind that variety there is the unity which has kept our people together through the ages in spite of misfortune and disaster. We are plunging into the world of science and technology and trying to organize our knowledge in such a way that it commands more of the forces of Nature, and we are held back by some inherited ideas and customs. There is no future for us without science and technology. At the same time that future will be shallow and empty and without any real meaning if we ignore or forget our past.

The Muslim Legacy: Division

Editors' Introduction: India has always been a nation of nations. Invasions have punctuated Indian history since the Aryans poured into the subcontinent around 1500 B.C.

Each invading group since the Aryans, such as the Greeks, the White Huns, the Jews, and Zoroastrians became a part of Indian life without fundamentally altering the culture. Some were absorbed into Indian life and lost their own identity. Some became separate communities which flowered in India's tolerant atmosphere.

The great exception to India's ability to absorb other groups was its experience with Islam. The Muslim invasions of India began peacefully in 712 and grew in number and militancy as the Turkish Muslims invaded from Afghanistan in the 11th century. By the beginning of the 16th century, most of north India had fallen under Turkish-Muslim control, commonly called the Moghul Dynasty, which ruled India from 1526 to 1707.

Under Moghul rule there was a great mixing of Hindu and Muslim ideas and practices. Each group borrowed from the other, and a rich Indo-Islamic development of the arts, poetry and architecture resulted. At the same time there was open conflict between the two communities. Muslims destroyed Hindu temples, and members of the two communities often fought. Muslims found Hindus vague and idolatrous and their community unfair to the lower castes. Hindus believed Muslims were rigid and authoritarian and their marriage laws, which allowed a man to have four wives, unfair to women.

In the last reading, Prime Minister Nehru alluded to the impact of Muslim rule in India. He mentioned the conflicts that resulted as well as the fresh ideas that Islam brought to the sub-continent. This dual legacy of conflict and cooperation has remained. One path India has followed has led to division between the two communities. The other path has led to cooperation and integration.

Religions are often more than a set of beliefs, they are also a way of life which shapes everyday behavior. The next reading attempts to explain some of the fundamental differences between Hindus and Muslims and why these two communities often "speak hate." It was written by Khushwant Singh, a famous contemporary Indian novelist and magazine editor, who happens to be a Sikh, that is, a member of a religious sect that developed in the 15th century in India partly as an attempt to reconcile the differences between Hindus and Muslims. All Sikhs use the last name Singh (lion) and follow the practice of wearing turbans and never cutting their hair.

What reasons does Khushwant Singh give for India's failure to absorb its Muslim population? Why have Hindus and Muslims failed to merge and become united?

"INDIA HAS BEEN the home of many different religions—Hindus, Muslims [members of the Islamic faith], Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Zoroastrians, and Jews. But for practical purposes you can divide India's 500 millions into just two communities, Muslims and others. Hindus, who form 80 per cent of the population of the country, have been able to come to terms with all other religious communities except the Muslims. Muslims have always stayed outside the mainstream of Indianism. Very few joined the freedom movement against the British. Of the thousands of Indian terrorists who were hanged by the British, you cannot name more than half a dozen Muslims" [said Dr. R. N. Dandekar].

"Their bodies are in India, but their hearts are in Arabia," added Dr. T. R. V. Murti, professor of Hinduism at the Benares Hindu University. "It is hard to believe that nine out of ten Muslims on the subcontinent are converts from Hinduism and are Indians by race, language, and way of living."

"I would not go so far as to accuse them of extraterritorial loyalty," protested Professor A. K. Saran of the Lucknow University. "Hindus and Muslims belong to two culture worlds. And the Muslims can never forget that for 700 years before the British occupied India, they ruled over the Hindus."

This is exactly what Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the found of Pakistan, used to say—Hindus and Muslims are not one people

Khushwant Singh, "Why Hindus and Muslims Speak Hate," *New York Times Magazine*, September 19, 1965. c 1965 by The New York Times Company. Reprinted by permission.

A refugee camp. (Information Service of India, New York)

with different religions, they are two separate and distinct nations.

Although Muslims belong to the same races and speak the same languages spoken by other Indians of the region in which they live, their customs and way of living differ in some respects. A Muslim child is given a distinctively Muslim name, such as Mohammed Ali. Sikhs and Hindus of northern India, particularly Jats, Rajputs, and Gurkhas, often have similar names; for example, my own surname, Singh. Even Christians in most parts of India retain their Hindu names; only conversion to Islam requires a change.

A Muslim boy is circumcised and learns verses of the Koran from a *mullah*. A Hindu boy has his head shaved, and, if he belongs to one of the three upper classes of Hinduism, he wears a sacred thread and is taught Sanskrit texts by a *pandit*.

The dietary laws of Hindus and Muslims are different. Hindus worship the cow. Muslims eat it. Hindus, if not vegetarian, eat pork. Muslims are seldom vegetarian and, like the Jews, consider the pig unclean. Muslims only eat the flesh of an animal slain by being bled to death. Hindus prefer to decapitate their

goat; Sikhs go further and consider eating the meat of an animal slain in the Muslim fashion to be sinful. There are certain differences in the style of dress of the two peoples. Hindus wear Gandhi caps and *dhotis* [draped man's clothes]. Muslims prefer fezzes or caps made of lamb's skin and usually wear loose-fitting pajama trousers.

Hindu women wear saris and sport a little red dot on their foreheads. Muslim women prefer the Punjabi *salwarkameez* or the baggy *gharara*. Muslim women are often veiled. Hindu women never veil themselves.

Hindus worship a multiplicity of gods, read many sacred texts and venerate innumberable avatars. Muslims worship the one and only Allah, honor Mohammed as His one and only Prophet and read the Koran as the only true revelation of God. Hindus go to many places of pilgrimage and wash off their sins in India's many sacred rivers. For the Muslim the only places of pilgrimage are Mecca and Medina or, if he is a Shia Moslem, Karbala in Iraq.

When a Hindu falls ill he consults a Hindu *vaid* learned in the Ayur-Vedic system of medicine. When a Muslim falls ill he consults a Muslim *hakim*, learned in the *yunani*, or Greek, system of medicine. When a Hindu dies, he is cremated and his ashes are immersed in a river or the ocean. When a Muslim dies, he is buried with his face towards Mecca.

Muslims look upon Hindus as mean, cunning, and cowardly, fit only to be *baboos* [clerks] or *banians* [shopkeepers]. They dismiss Hindu scholars as sanctimonious gasbags. "The only language a Hindu understands," say the Muslims, "is the language of the sword."

Hindus look upon Muslims as dirty, incapable of hard work, and grasping, "Give them Kashmir and they'll be asking for something else," say the Hindus. "Their mentality is that of the Arab Bedouin. They are not the sons of the desert but its father, because wherever they go they create a desert. Look what they did to Hindustan!"

In every Indian city there is a Muslim locality distinct from the Hindu. Even villages where the two live together are more often than not known by their religious character—Muslim village, Hindu village, Sikh village.

The Muslim Legacy: Synthesis

Editors' Introduction:

> If one pattern persisted throughout India's long history, it was the repeated subjugation of Indians by foreign forces—and the turnabout conquest of the conquerors by Hinduism. . . . None could resist the persistence and flexibility of Hinduism's time-tested power. None, that is, until the Muslims appeared.*

In addition to the ideological and social differences between the Hindus and Muslims, there are historical reasons for their animosity. The Muslims ruled parts of India for over five hundred years while Hindus smarted under their domination, which was often cruel.

The Muslims came to India in three waves starting in the seventh century. The first group, which came from Arabia, was relatively small and had little impact. The second migration began shortly after A.D. 1000, when raiding armies came from Afghanistan to pillage the rich cities and monuments of northern India. By A.D. 1206 these invaders were able to establish the Sultanate of Delhi. They ruled parts of northern India for the next three centuries. The most important Muslim group was the Turkish Moghuls, who founded an empire in 1526 and dominated India until 1707, when the last great Moghul emperor, Aurangzab, died.

But Moghuls left other legacies in India besides the memory of domination. The Moghul Empire is one of the glories of Indian history. Under Moghul rulers, great heights were reached in the arts, music, literature, and especially architecture. The great Em-

From *Glimpses of World History* by Jawaharlal Nehru; Asia Publishing House, Inc. New York.

* Lucille Schulberg, *Historic India* (New York: Time-Life Books, 1969), p. 155.

peror Akbar had a keen interest in architecture. He encouraged the creation of a new style harmoniously merging traditional Hindu and Islamic elements. This style is exemplified by Fatehpur-Sikri, near Agra, built during Akbar's reign. Another Moghul emperor, Shah Jahan, built the Taj Mahal, "the miracle of miracles, the final wonder of the world," in memory of his wife. Completed in 1647, this white marble mausoleum, a brilliant combination of Hindu and Muslim styles, rests so gently on the ground that it seems likely at any moment to soar into the sky.

Akbar, the greatest of the Moghul emperors, was continually searching for ways to merge Hindu and Muslim traditions in philosophy as well as in art and architecture. To learn about Akbar, we turn to excerpts from letters written by one of the most famous men of modern Indian history, Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister after independence in 1947. As a leader of India's independence movement, Nehru was imprisoned numerous times by the British. While in jail and cut off from his family, he decided to contribute to his daughter's education by writing her a series of letters on world history. His daughter is today the Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi.

What kind of man was Akbar? What did Nehru, a Hindu, think of this Muslim ruler?

FOR NEARLY FIFTY years Akbar ruled India, from early in 1556 to the end of 1605. This was the period of the revolt of the Netherlands in Europe and of Shakespeare in England. Akbar's name stands out in Indian history, and sometimes, and in some ways, he reminds one of Ashoka. It is a strange thing that a Buddhist Emperor of India of the third century before Christ and a Muslim Emperor of India of the sixteenth century after Christ should speak in the same manner and almost in the same voice. One wonders if this is not perhaps the voice of India herself speaking through two of her great sons. . . .

Physically, Akbar was extraordinarily strong and active, and he loved nothing better than hunting wild and dangerous animals. As a soldier he was brave to the point of recklessness. His amazing energy can be judged from a famous march of his from Agra to Ahmedabad in nine days. A revolt had broken out in Gujrat, and Akbar rushed with a little army across the desert of Rajputana, a distance of 450 miles. It was an extraordinary feat. There were no railways or motor cars then, I need hardly remind you.

But great men have something besides all these qualities: they have, it is said, a magnetism which draws people to them. Akbar had this personal magnetism and charm in abundant measure; his compelling eyes were, in the wonderful description of the Jesuits, "vibrant like the sea in sunshine." Is it any wonder that this man should fascinate us still and that his most royal and manly figure should tower high above the crowds of men who have been but kings? . . .

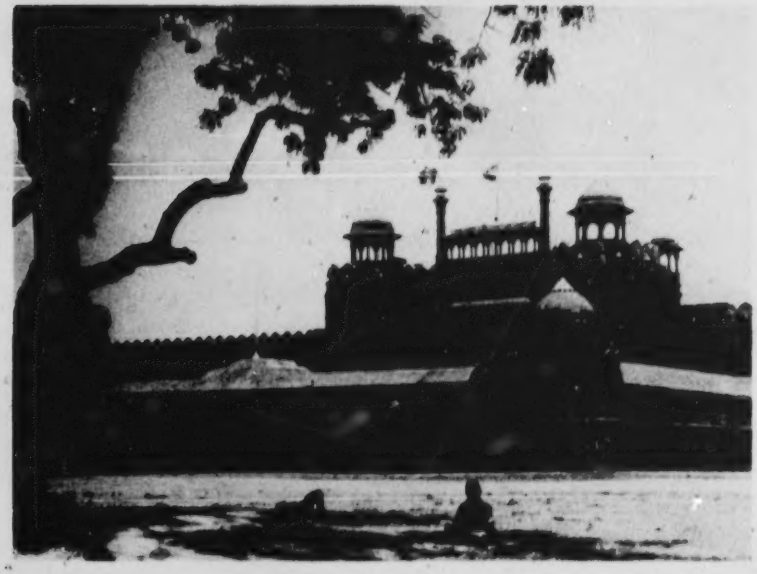
Akbar's capital was at Agra to begin with, and he built the fort there. Then he built a new city at Fatehpur-Sikri, about fifteen miles from Agra. He chose this site because a saintly person, Shaikh Salim Chishti, lived there. Here he built a splendid city, "much greater than London," according to an English traveler of the day, and for over fifteen years this was the capital of his Empire. Later he made Lahore his capital. "His Majesty," said Abul-Fazl, the friend and minister of Akbar, "plans splendid edifices, and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay.". . .

It must have been a busy life of conquest and consolidation of a vast empire. But right through it one can see another of Akbar's remarkable traits. This was his boundless curiosity and his search for truth. Whoever could throw light on any subject was sent for and questioned. The men of different religions gathered round him . . . , each hoping to convert this mighty monarch. They often quarrelled with each other, and Akbar sat by, listening to their arguments and putting many questions to them. He seems to have been convinced that truth was no monopoly of any religion or sect, and he proclaimed that his avowed principle was one of universal toleration in religion.

A historian of his reign, Badauni, who must have participated in many of these gatherings himself, gives an interesting account of Akbar, which I shall quote. Badauni himself was an orthodox Muslim, and he thoroughly disapproved of these activities of Akbar.

> His Majesty collected the opinions of everyone, especially of such as were not Muslims, retaining whatever he approved of, and rejecting everything which was against his disposition and ran counter to his wishes. From his

Examples of Islamic influences in Indian architecture: Taj Mahal, Kutib Minar, and the Red Fort in Delhi. (Government of India Tourist Office, New York; Information Services of India, New York)



earliest childhood to his manhood, and from his manhood to old age, his Majesty has passed through the most various phases, and through all sorts of religious practices and sectarian beliefs, and has collected everything which people can find in books, with a talent of selection peculiar to him and a spirit of enquiry opposed to every Islamic principle. Thus a faith based on some elementary principles traced itself on the mirror of his heart, and as a result of all the influences brought to bear on his Majesty, there grew, gradually as the outline on a stone, the conviction in his heart that there were sensible men in all religions, and abstemious thinkers, and men endowed with miraculous powers, among all nations. If some true knowledge was thus everywhere to be found, why should truth be confined to one religion?

Akbar died in October 1605 in his sixty-fourth year, after a reign of nearly fifty years. He lies buried in a beautiful mausoleum at Sikandra, near Agra.

In Akbar's reign there flourished in northern India—mostly in Benares—a man whose name is known to every villager in the United Provinces. He is far better known there, and is more popular than Akbar or any king can be. I refer to Tulsi Das, who wrote the *Ramacharitmanas* [the *Ramayana*].

Editors' Postscript: The last paragraph of this selection is interesting because it indicates that the Hindu tradition remained strong even at the height of Muslim rule. In fact, as historian Lucille Schulberg has written, most Hindus responded to the alien force (Muslim rule) with what today is called ghetto psychology: that is, they burrowed still deeper into their Hinduism.

Unfortunately, the last great Moghul ruler, Aurangzeb, opposed religious toleration. A devout Muslim and a puritan in his habits, Aurangzeb dismissed the court musicians, artists, and historians. He discouraged poets, who "dealt in falsehood"; banned history, which "gave rise to feelings of undue pride"; and suppressed drinking and gambling. His military campaigns drained his resources. He also dismissed the Hindu clerks in his service and reimposed a poll tax on all "unbelievers." These oppressive measures against the Hindus were perhaps the most destructive acts of his reign, for memories of Aurangzeb's oppressive rule lingered in the minds of Hindu Indians for generations. By his death in 1707, the Moghul Empire was on the edge of ruin. It was the British who then came to fill the power vacuum.

A Killing for India

Editors' Introduction: British traders had first come to the subcontinent for spices, cotton, and other precious commodities of trade. Although by 1830 they had attained almost complete control over the subcontinent, only a handful of Englishmen actually represented the power of the British crown.

To secure their position, the British encouraged Indians to direct their discontent against other Indians, rather than against the British rule. As the desire for independence grew, the British undermined the Muslims' trust in the Indian National Congress Party. Muslims feared that the Party spoke only for Hindu interests. When the British established elections for the central legislative council, the Muslims were made a separate electoral group. "Divide and rule" was the British policy, if not motto. It was in the British interest to foster Muslim separatism.

After 1919, Mohammed Ali Jinnah became the voice of Muslim concerns in the subcontinent. Generally, the Muslim political party —the Muslim League—cooperated with the British in return for safeguards and concessions for the Muslim minority of 120 million. In 1940 the Muslim League passed the Lahore Resolution, demanding the creation of separate, autonomous states for the areas in which Muslims were in the majority. The final terms of independence included the partitioning of the subcontinent and the creation of the new state of Pakistan.

As the boundary lines between India and Pakistan were being drawn, millions of Hindus living in what became Pakistan fled to India, and millions of Muslims in India sought refuge in Pakistan. This exchange of populations was one of the greatest uprootings of

Balachandra Rajan, *The Dark Dancer*. Copyright © 1958 by Simon & Schuster. Reprinted by permission of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

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peoples in history. More than fifteen million people gave up their homes and possessions and sought new homes. Nearly three million refugees traveled by train. Millions of others traveled by bullock cart or walked with their few possessions in their hands. During this exchange of people, long-suppressed Hindu-Muslim hostilities came to the surface, and violence broke out on both sides.

Perhaps no one will ever know how many deaths resulted. Pakistan has estimated that more than 500,000 Muslims lost their lives during the three months that followed partition. It is probable that just as many Hindus were killed. Kidnapping, rape, and pillage were frequent in this bloody period. Throughout history, whenever religious symbols have become the focal point for cultural, political, or economic conflict, the resulting wars have been especially vicious. Think of the anguish of Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland, of Christians and Muslims in Turkey and Cyprus, and of Muslims and Jews in the Middle East.

In India, many of the horrors of partition took place on trains as Hindus fled to India and Muslims to Pakistan. The following selection is a fictional attempt to capture both the terror of the time and some of the humane qualities that persisted. Krishnan, the hero of the story, is a South Indian trying to join his wife in a border town. He thinks he is not involved in the struggle of partition. Why couldn't he escape? Could anyone?

At this point in the story, Krishnan has jumped aboard a crowded train heading north and squeezed into a lavatory that is deserted except for one man, dressed as a Brahmin, like himself. Krishnan tries to engage the man in conversation but soon realizes that he is a Muslim. The man suddenly threatens Krishnan with a knife. In a desperate effort to gain time, Krishnan asks the man about his experiences in the conflict. The Muslim tells him that the Hindus raped and killed his wife, and he fled. As the Muslim talks, Krishnan grabs the knife, but hesitates, unable to bring himself to kill another man. At that moment the train stops and armed men climb aboard, butchering every Muslim they find. Blood oozes beneath the lavatory door.

KRISHNAN LOOKED AT the Muslim's ashen face. He threw the knife back to him. "Take it," he said, "and sell it for what you can."

Something close to gratitude leaped into the man's eyes. He held his hand out awkwardly. "May Allah be merciful," he said.

The door burst open, and the Sikh came in. He was a big man, big enough to fill most of the entrance. . . .

"What the devil do you suppose you're doing here?"

"I'm a government servant," said Krishnan lightheartedly. "I need privacy for my priority files."

"Government servant be damned. That's what they all say, and it doesn't save them."

Krishnan produced his passport, his Secretariat pass, his fuel-ration card, and his wedding photograph. The Sikh examined them carefully. He took a good look at Krishnan.

"South Indian, eh? No wonder you're a crackpot. Better be careful," he warned. "It's always better to be safe than funny."

Then he moved further in and saw the red on Krishnan's sleeve. "How the blazes did you get that?"

Refugees from the partition riots compete for space in—and on—a train.
(Wide World Photos)

Out of the corner of his eye Krishnan saw the appeal flash furtively in the Muslim's face.

"I was on the town," he explained. "The girl was Muslim and she had different ideas."

"Good boy," the Sikh said. "It's the only way to live now." He didn't actually believe that, but it was the right fib, and both of them had to strut through its pretenses.

The Sikh turned to the Muslim. "Who's this stringbean supposed to be?"

"He's a holy man," said Krishnan. "He's taken a vow of silence."

"Vow of silence, eh! Well, he can break it long enough to say his prayers. Go on and say your prayers," he shouted.

The Muslim said nothing.

"I thought as much," said Krishnan. "He's scared of you, of course, but he's much more afraid of Shiva."

"I've had enough of this tomfoolery," the Sikh grumbled. He turned to the Muslim. "Take your *dhoti* off and we'll see how holy you are."

The Muslim's face went white and his eyes tensed.

"Take your *dhoti* off, you circumcised son of a pig."

The knife flashed upward in the Muslim's hand.

The Sikh was much bigger, and he was fast for his size. The *kirpan* [dagger] slashed at the other man's wrist, almost cutting the hand off. The knife clattered down, and the Sikh kicked it away. He crashed the Muslim against the wall and forced him back as he slid down, arching him helplessly against the roll of bedding. The *kirpan* plunged downward. . . . The Sikh struck again and, unnecessarily, again. . . .

The knife was still there, plunged into his body. The Sikh looked at it uncomprehendingly, almost as if he didn't know who owned it. He pulled it out impersonally, tidying up the place, wiping the knife scrupulously on the nearest piece of cloth, which happened to be the fringe of the Muslim's *dhoti*. . . .

When he looked at Krishnan he must have seen something that loosened his emotions, because he straightened up, his chest heaving, his eyes beginning to smolder. "What the

devil are you staring for?" he demanded thickly. "Don't tell me you've never seen a dead man."

"I've never seen a murder," Krishnan said. He was sickened more than a little by what had happened, and if he faced the Sikh squarely it was not out of courage or even righteousness but simply to avert his eyes from the alternative.

"Murder!" the Sikh roared. Some of the reflexes were beginning to come back. "Whose side are you on, anyway, you South Indian weasel?"

"I'm an Indian," retorted Krishnan, deliberately unemotional, so that the sense of repulsion wouldn't accidentally leak into his voice. "It may sound stupid, but I'm on the side of India."

"You think I'm not Indian!" The Sikh blazed at him furiously. "You think we haven't paid for being Indian? The thousands that are dead and the millions that are homeless. The rich land abandoned and the lives we've left behind. That's been our sacrifice for making India. What have *you* done that gives you the right to talk? . . . You people sit in air-conditioned offices, decide our fate, agree to our death warrants. It's noble to preach sermons. But it's we who pay for all those fancy principles. What would *you* feel like if it started to happen to you? What would you do if you came home one night and found the house stripped clean of everything you possessed, and your wife dead on the floor with only blood for her clothing? What d'you suppose you'd do then? Would you sit on the floor and preach your sermon to her? Would you put your hands in your pockets and tell yourself that somebody somewhere has to die for freedom? Or would you run into the street bellowing about brotherly love and turn the other cheek till they bashed your head in?"

"I'm sorry," said Krishnan gently. . . .

"I left her there," the Sikh said, not hearing the apology, speaking as if he were re-enacting a dream. "I ran away from it, wanting to forget, like the thousands who'd lost their homes and families. But it was impossible. I could never leave her. Night after night I'd struggle not to remember, but no matter how thick the walls, the blood would come through, and in my

dreams I'd hear her screaming and pleading, and my mind would be trampled by the images of their filthiness. Then I'd wake up, my hand on my *kirpan*, and until the dream stopped the house would be burning with anger. I'd never killed a man till five minutes ago. I'm a mechanic; my job is to put things together. But this man, this vengeance, I've killed more times than I can ever forget."

He paused and looked narrowly at Krishnan, stating his justification, not expecting to be understood. "When my hand went down it wasn't simply my hand. And when it was over something else was over also. I was different, a chain had suddenly broken. I wasn't owned by the remembrance any more."

Editors' Postscript: Partition was a costly means of giving some Muslims of the subcontinent the right to rule themselves. Except for periodic riots in isolated parts of India, tensions between the Muslims and Hindus in India have been considerably reduced. The second president of independent India was a Muslim—a fact that attests to the efforts to bring harmony between these communities.

For Pakistan, however, divided in two by over 1,000 miles of Indian territory, partition was only the beginning of the problem. An article in *Newsweek* magazine summarized the difficulties:

> Physically and politically, Pakistan is unique among the world's nations; between its rugged, relatively empty western region and its desperately overpopulated eastern region lie 1,000 miles of Indian territory. And more than space divides the two parts of Pakistan. It is a nation of two radically divergent cultures, of two totally different peoples who have despised each other through history. The lighter-skinned, aggressive Punjabis of West Pakistan scorn the Bengalis of the east as spiritless peasants or tricky tradesmen. And the Bengalis, whose rich rice land and lucrative jute crops have paid Pakistan's bills ever since the founding of the country in 1947, regard the Punjabis as barbarians—and, to make matters worse, oppressive barbarians who have monopolized Pakistan's government and army. Snapped one Bengali leader: "We have never been anything but a colony of the west."*

East Pakistan was finally able to win independence from West Pakistan in 1971; the region is now the nation of Bangladesh, thanks partly to economic, military, and psychological aid from India.

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A Sword of Sugar

The British in India

Editors' Introduction: A traveler to New Delhi, or to any Indian city, cannot help noticing evidence of the British presence: street names like Cornwallis Road or Wellesley Road; government buildings and avenues laid out as in Western capitals; signs in English side by side with signs in Hindu or Urdu; newspapers and magazines in the English language; debates in the Indian parliament conducted in English; double-decker buses from London competing for space in the crowded streets; men dressed in Savile Row business suits rushing from office to office.

Why all these English influences in a land so far from England, and so different from England? The following selection suggests some of the reasons.

For centuries European powers sought the spices and textiles of the East. Great Britain was only one of many European powers that sent traders in search of India. The first Europeans to reach India by sea were the Portuguese in 1498. Once the sea route was established, the Dutch, the French, and the English followed in rapid succession. Gradually, however, the British East India Company established control over larger and larger areas of India. In 1757, Robert Clive defeated the Bengali and French forces at the battle (or non-battle) of Plassey, and after 1764, the British had full power in Bengal. By 1803, they had

By Donald J. Johnson and Jean E. Johnson.

defeated the Maratha forces, the only remaining threat to their dominance of the Indian subcontinent. They held control until 1947.

What was the nature of English dominance over India? Why did the Indians call it the "sword of sugar"? Why has it left such mixed legacies? We have already suggested how the British sought to "divide and rule" (p. 25). Let us now consider the different perceptions the Indians and English had of each other.

The first traders to India were assimilated into Indian culture. As H. G. Rawlingson describes this process:

> The earlier Englishmen in India adapted themselves to the customs and habits of the country. Colonel Kirkpatrick, Resident at Hyderabad, "married a Muslim lady of rank, spoke Persian like a gentleman, and in manners and costume could hardly be distinguished from a Muslim noble." The "nabobs," as the Anglo-Indians were familiarly called in the eighteenth century, were thoroughly Oriental in their outlook, with their queer Eastern habits, their hookahs and curries and native servants, and above all their inexplicable habit of taking a daily bath.*

But as the years passed, attitudes changed; many English came to believe that they had the task of "civilizing India," uplifting the backward, superstitious masses, and bringing them Western culture and enlightenment. Ronny Heaslop, a character in E. M. Forster's novel *A Passage to India*, believed in this mission:

> "We're not out here for the purpose of behaving pleasantly! . . . We're out here to do justice and keep the peace.". . .
>
> "Your sentiments are those of a god" [his mother said quietly].
>
> Trying to recover his temper, he said, "India likes gods."
>
> "And Englishmen like posing as gods.". . .
>
> [Angrily, Heaslop answers] "I'm out here to work and to hold this wretched country by force. . . . We're not

* H. G. Rawlingson, *India: A Short Cultural History* (New York: Praeger, 1952), p. 407.

pleasant in India, and we don't intend to be pleasant. We've something more important to do."

This spirit was reflected in and reinforced by a popular poem by Rudyard Kipling, written in 1899. Note the terms Kipling uses for the Indians. Why, according to him, would the "White Man" be hated? If you were one of the "fluttered folk and wild," how would you feel about the White Man and his "burden"?

The White Man's Burden

Take up the White Man's burden—
Send forth the best ye breed—
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's Burden—
In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple,
An hundred times made plain,
To seek another's profit,
And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden—
The savage wars of peace—
Fill full the mouth of Famine
And bid the sickness cease;
And when your goal is nearest
The end for others sought,
Watch Sloth and heathen Folly
Bring all your hope to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden—
And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better,
The hate of those ye guard— . . .
By all ye cry or whisper,

By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples
Shall weigh your Gods and you.

While English children were reciting "The White Man's Burden," Indians were chanting their own songs:

Gold and gems that none could weigh
The wizard race did spirit away;
How they stole could none descry,
Such a spell did blind our eye.

From Haughty Isle in legions vast
Locusts come, devouring fast
All the corn in all our land,
To the people leave but sand.

In subject Ind from day to day
Men grow thin and pine away,
Starved of food and worn by thought,
By toil and hunger overwrought.*

What is the "wizard race"? Why, according to this song, did the English earn the hate of those they guarded? Was it "Sloth and heathen Folly," as Kipling claimed, that were making India poor?

To most Indians at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the white foreigner was someone to be feared and avoided. How would Ronny Heaslop have reacted to this image of the white man?

> The normal reaction of the unsophisticated Indian villager in the face of an Englishman is headlong flight. I and my elder brother, as young boys, jumped into a roadside ditch. We did not do so, however, from any ignoble motive of self-preservation, but to save a precious cargo which we were carrying and which we believed to be in danger from the Englishman.
>
> The plain story is this. I and my brother had been sent to buy some bananas from the bazaar and were re-

* Nirad Chaudhuri, *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*. Originally published by the University of California Press; reprinted by permission of the Regents of the University of California.

turning with a bunch when we saw an Englishman coming up the road from the opposite direction. I have no clear recollection who exactly he was, but he may have been Mr. Stapleton, the Inspector of Schools. As soon as we caught sight of him we hid ourselves in the ditch, because we had been told that Englishmen were as fond of bananas as any monkey could be and that they swooped on the fruit wherever and whenever they saw it. So we crouched in the ditch among the nettles until the Englishman had passed. This incident took place when my brother was only learning his English alphabet and when the sole source of knowledge about Englishmen was oral tradition.*

* *Ibid.*, pp. 113–40.

Karma

Editors' Introduction: The relationship between Indians and Englishmen was never simple. The British, it is true, looked down on their "new-caught, sullen peoples / Half devil and half child," but they also respected the complexity of the ancient Indian culture. When Sanskrit was first translated into European languages and some of the classical Indian texts were read in Europe, many scholars were amazed by the greatness of Indian philosophy and wisdom. The German philosopher Schopenhauer said of one of the earliest translated Hindu religious texts, the *Upanishads*, "It stirs the spirit to the very depths of the soul." Many Western writers, including the American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson, were greatly influenced by Indian thought.

The Indians, for their part, although deeply resenting their exploitation under colonialism, also recognized the contributions of the British. The rapid spread of Western thought led to reforms in Hinduism and in many areas of Indian life. After 1835, instruction in Indian schools was conducted in English. Many Indians sought to imitate the British, to become "brown Englishmen" in manners, taste, dress, and speech. Mohan Lal, the main character in the following short story, is just such a man.

In Volume I you were introduced to the concept of *karma*. Good *karma* is built up by doing the appropriate action (*dharma*). From an Indian point of view, what kind of *karma* has Mohan Lal built up? What kind of *karma* has his wife built up? Why do you think the author titled this story "*Karma*"?

SIR MOHAN LAL looked at himself in the mirror of a first-class

Khushwant Singh, "Karma," in Natwar-Singh, ed., *Tales from Modern India* (New York: Macmillan, 1966). Reprinted by permission of the author.

waiting room at the railway station. The mirror was obviously made in India. The red oxide at its back had come off at several places, and long lines of translucent glass cut across its surface. Sir Mohan smiled at the mirror with an air of pity and patronage.

"You are so very much like everything else in this country, inefficient, dirty, indifferent," he murmured.

The mirror smiled back at Sir Mohan.

"You are a bit of all right, old chap," it said. "Distinguished, efficient—even handsome. That neatly trimmed moustache—the suit from Savile Row with the carnation in the buttonhole—the aroma of eau de cologne, talcum powder, and scented soap all about you! Yes, old fellow, you are a bit of all right."

Sir Mohan threw out his chest, smoothed his Balliol tie for the umpteenth time, and waved a goodbye to the mirror.

He glanced at his watch. There was still time for a quick one.

"*Koi Hai* [Anyone there]?"

A bearer in white livery appeared through a wire gauze door.

"*Ek Chota* [One little one]," ordered Sir Mohan, and sank into a large cane chair to drink and ruminate.

Outside the waiting room Sir Mohan Lal's luggage lay piled along the wall. On a small gray steel trunk Lachmi, Lady Mohan Lal, sat chewing a betel leaf and fanning herself with a newspaper. She was short and fat and in her middle forties. She wore a dirty white sari with a red border. On one side of her nose glistened a diamond nose ring, and she had several gold bangles on her arms. She had been talking to the bearer until Sir Mohan had summoned him inside. As soon as he had gone, she hailed a passing railway coolie.

"Where does the *zenana* [reserved-seating car] stop?"

"Right at the end of the platform."

The coolie flattened his turban to make a cushion, hoisted the steel trunk on his head, and moved down the platform. Lady Lal picked up her brass tiffin carrier and ambled along behind him. On the way she stopped by a hawker's stall to

replenish her silver betel-leaf case, and then joined the coolie. She sat down on her steel trunk (which the coolie had put down) and started talking to him.

"Are the trains very crowded on these lines?"

"These days all trains are crowded, but you'll find room in the *zenana*."

"Then I might as well get over the bother of eating."

Lady Lal opened the brass carrier and took out a bundle of cramped chapatties [unleavened bread] and some mango

A "brown Englishman" with his entourage. (Industrial Media Services)

pickle. While she ate, the coolie sat opposite her on his haunches, drawing lines in the gravel with his finger.

"Are you traveling alone, sister?"

"No, I am with my master, brother. He is in the waiting room. He travels first class. He is a vizier and a barrister, and meets so many officers and Englishmen in the trains—and I am only a native woman. I can't understand English and don't know their ways, so I keep to my *zenana* interclass."

Lachmi chatted away merrily. She was fond of a little gossip and had no one to talk to at home. Her husband never had any time to spare for her. She lived in the upper story of the house and he on the ground floor. He did not like her poor il-

literate relatives hanging about his bungalow, so they never came. He came up to her once in a while at night and stayed for a few minutes. He just ordered her about in anglicized Hindustani, and she obeyed passively. These nocturnal visits had, however, borne no fruit.

The signal came down and the clanging of the bell announced the approaching train. Lady Lal hurriedly finished off her meal. She got up, still licking the stone of the pickled mango. She emitted a long, loud belch as she went to the public tap to rinse her mouth and wash her hands. After washing she dried her mouth and hands with the loose end of her sari, and walked back to her steel trunk, belching and thanking the gods for the favor of a filling meal.

The train steamed in. Lachmi found herself facing an almost empty interclass *zenana* compartment next to the guard's van, at the tail end of the train. The rest of the train was packed. She heaved her squat, bulky frame through the door and found a seat by the window. She produced a two-anna bit [a small coin] from a knot in her sari and dismissed the coolie. She then opened her betel case and made herself two betel leaves charged with a red and white paste, minced betelnuts and cardamoms. These she thrust into her mouth till her cheeks bulged on both sides. Then she rested her chin on her hands and sat gazing idly at the jostling crowd on the platform.

The arrival of the train did not disturb Sir Mohan Lal's sangfroid [poise]. He continued to sip his Scotch and ordered the bearer to tell him when he had moved the luggage to a first-class compartment. Excitement, bustle, and hurry were exhibitions of bad breeding, and Sir Mohan was eminently well bred. He wanted everything "tickety-boo" and orderly. In his five years abroad, Sir Mohan had acquired the manners and attitudes of the upper classes. He rarely spoke Hindustani. When he did, it was like an Englishman's—only the very necessary words and properly anglicized. But he fancied his English, finished and refined at no less a place than Oxford University. He was fond of conversation, and like a cultured Englishman he could talk on almost any subject—books, politics, people.

How frequently had he heard English people say that he spoke like an Englishman!

Sir Mohan wondered if he would be traveling alone. It was a Cantonment, and some English officers might be on the train. His heart warmed at the prospect of an impressive conversation. He never showed any sign of eagerness to talk to the English, as most Indians did. Nor was he loud, aggressive, and opinionated like them. He went about his business with an expressionless matter-of-factness. He would retire to his corner by the window and get out a copy of *The Times*. He would fold it in a way in which the name of the paper was visible to others while he did the crossword puzzle. *The Times* always attracted attention. Someone would like to borrow it when he put it aside with a gesture signifying "I've finished with it." Perhaps someone would recognize his Balliol tie, which he always wore while traveling. That would open a vista leading to a fairyland of Oxford colleges, masters, dons, tutors, boat races, and rugger matches. If both *The Times* and the tie failed, Sir Mohan would "*Koi Hai*" his bearer to get the Scotch out. Whisky never failed with Englishmen. Then followed Sir Mohan's handsome gold cigarette case filled with English cigarettes. English cigarettes in India? How on earth did he get them? Sure he didn't mind? And Sir Mohan's understanding smile—of course he didn't. But could he use the Englishman as a medium to commune with his dear old England? Those five years of gray bags and gowns, of sports blazers and mixed doubles, of dinners at the Inns of Court and nights with Piccadilly prostitutes. Five years of a crowded, glorious life. Worth far more than the forty-five in India with his dirty, vulgar countrymen, with sordid details of the road to success, of nocturnal visits to the upper story and all-too-brief sexual acts with obese old Lachmi, smelling of sweat and raw onions.

Sir Mohan's thoughts were disturbed by the bearer announcing the installation of the Sahib's luggage in a first-class coupe next to the engine. Sir Mohan walked to his coupe with a studied gait. He was dismayed. The compartment was empty. With a sigh he sat down in a corner and opened the copy of *The Times* he had read several times before.

Sir Mohan looked out of the window down the crowded platform. His face lit up as he saw two English soldiers trudging along, looking in all the compartments for room. They had their haversacks slung behind their backs and walked unsteadily. Sir Mohan decided to welcome them, even though they were entitled to travel only second class. He would speak to the guard.

One of the soldiers came up to the last compartment and stuck his face through the window. He surveyed the compartment and noticed the unoccupied berth.

" 'Ere, Bill," he shouted, "one 'ere."

His companion came up, also looked in, and looked at Sir Mohan.

"Get the nigger out," he muttered to his companion.

They opened the door, and turned to the half-smiling, half-protesting Sir Mohan.

"Reserved!" yelled Bill.

"*Janta*—Reserved. Army—*Fauj*," exclaimed Jim, pointing to his khaki shirt.

"*Ek dum jao*—get out!"

"I say, I say, surely," protested Sir Mohan in his Oxford accent.

The soldiers paused. It almost sounded like English, but they knew better than to trust their inebriated ears. The engine whistled and the guard waved his green flag.

They picked up Sir Mohan's suitcase and flung it onto the platform. Then followed his thermos-flask, suitcase, bedding, and *The Times*. Sir Mohan was livid with rage.

"Preposterous, preposterous," he shouted, hoarse with anger. "I'll have you arrested—guard, guard!"

Bill and Jim paused again. It did sound like English, but it was too much of the King's for them.

"Keep yer ruddy mouth shut!" And Jim struck Sir Mohan flat on the face.

The engine gave another short whistle and the train began to move. The soldiers caught Sir Mohan by the arms and flung him out of the train. He reeled backwards, tripped on his bedding, and landed on the suitcase.

"Toodle-oo!"

Sir Mohan's feet were glued to the earth and he lost his speech. He stared at the lighted windows of the train going past him in quickening tempo. The tail end of the train appeared with a red light and the guard standing in the open doorway with the flags in his hands.

In the interclass *zenana* compartment was Lachmi, fair and fat, on whose nose the diamond nose ring glistened against the station lights. Her mouth was bloated with betel saliva which she had been storing up to spit as soon as the train had cleared the station. As the train sped past the lighted part of the platform, Lady Lal spat and sent a jet of red dribble flying across like a dart.

History: Fact or Fiction?

Editors' Introduction: Were the British devoted public servants serving an ungrateful nation of barbarians? Or were they greedy imperialists draining India of her lifeblood and expecting to be thanked for doing so?

We have considered some of the conflicting views Indians and English had of each other. Which is correct? Can we arrive at an impartial, objective evaluation? Given the misunderstandings of both sides, can anyone write an impartial history of the British experience in India?

Textbooks attempt to be objective and impartial. The two readings that follow are both taken from high school textbooks, the first an American book, the second an Indian one. Both attempt to interpret a period of British rule in India.

The first reading is taken from a world history text widely used in American schools. What does the author suggest were the major legacies of British rule in India?

The second selection describes the same period, but from an Indian perspective. After reading these two excerpts, what conclusions do you draw about textbooks in general? What are the problems in trying to sum up so long a span of history in so short a space? If you were asked to sum up the last 100 years of American history in the same number of words, what events would you choose to include?

An American Text

BRITAIN COMPLETELY DOMINATED the Indian Peninsula following the Indian Mutiny in 1857. The British remained the mas-

ters until 1947, when India and Pakistan became independent. During those ninety years between 1857 and 1947, British rule changed India in many ways. One of the most important results of British rule was the political unification of India. From the start this was the British aim. In 1865 one Englishman wrote home that they were "making a people in India where hitherto there have been hundreds of Tribes but no people." Unification was achieved in five ways.

Government—First, the English established a government that directly or indirectly ruled all of the peninsula. Britain controlled about three-fifths of India, known as British India, directly through the bureaucracy headed by the viceroy. The rest of the subcontinent was governed indirectly through the semi-independent princely states. There were 562 of these scattered throughout the peninsula, and between Bombay and Delhi, a distance of 845 miles, the traveller would have to cross 36 frontiers. These kingdoms ranged in size from Hyderabad, which was about the area of Idaho, down to petty principalities no larger than a few city blocks. Some of the rulers were fabulously rich; the Nizam of Hyderabad was reputed to be the wealthiest man in the world. The link between British India and the princely states was the viceroy, who not only headed the bureaucracy which governed British India, but also represented the British crown in its relations with the princely states. These states were independent except in matters of defense and foreign policy. Thus all of India was united under a single power—that of the viceroy at Delhi.

The restoration of order—Another way in which the British created Indian unity was by restoring internal order. During the twilight years of the Mogul Empire in the eighteenth century, India experienced a period of anarchy. Every village, by necessity, had to protect itself by a high wall. Robber bands roamed the countryside looting and killing, and the successful robber chief might set himself up as a local ruler of a small principality. It was unsafe to travel from Delhi to Agra, a dis-

From *A Global History of Man*, by Leften S. Stavrianos *et al.*, pp. 535–57. Copyright © 1962 and 1966 by Allyn and Bacon, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

tance of 200 miles, without an armed escort, and only the rich and the powerful could find either justice or security. The British restored order, first by martial law enforced by the army, and then through the creation of a police force. The most difficult problem to solve was how to overcome the old suspicion that the police were corrupt and that the shepherd was more terrible than the wolf. By the early years of the nineteenth century, however, political and internal security had been achieved.

One law for all—A third unifying force was the establishment of what is called the rule of law, which means that the British enforced a single law for all Indians. Thus Moslem and Hindu, outcaste and Brahmin, rich and poor, all were subject to one law and could find justice under this law. Before the British arrived, Indian law had been a jumble of Moslem and Hindu customs. At first, the English simply tried to curb the worst examples of barbarism and injustice. They tried to prevent brutal punishments, such as cutting off the hand of a thief, impaling a convicted robber, or turning over murderers to the vengeance of the dead man's family. Likewise, they tried to correct the worst aspects of Hindu family law whereby a husband had the right to cut off the nose of an unfaithful wife and to marry off his daughters as child brides.

In 1859 the British decided to abolish this hodgepodge of ancient laws and establish a single and uniform law for all. The principle that this law should be the same for everybody and should be administered honestly, without pressure from the rich and powerful, was one of Britain's greatest contributions to modern India. How revolutionary this idea was can be seen in the reaction of a rich Indian who bitterly opposed the introduction of English law into India. His chief complaint was that poor men should receive the same treatment before the law as rich men like himself. In the old days, he said:

> If any man without a well-established reputation ventured to go into court and lodge a complaint against a respectable person like myself, if he did not make good his accusation, he knew very well that he would probably have both his ears cut off and be turned out of court.

> Hence, in those days no such men ever ventured to make such a complaint or show their faces in any place near a court; but now see how it is. Any low-caste man can not only go to the English court and lodge a complaint against me, but he can compel me to meet him in open court face to face and answer his questions as if I were a common man of no standing whatever. It is this that we complain of. There is no honor, no sense of right, no justice left. That which you call justice and impartiality is really wrong and oppression.*

Communications—The British also unified India by solving the problem of transportation. India has only three river systems that can be used for navigation. The rest dry up in the hot weather, since they are not fed by mountain snows but by the seasonal monsoon rains. Food and supplies which were shipped inland had to be moved by ox cart or human carrier. Consequently, until very recent times, terrible famines occurred in India because food could not be transported from regions of surplus to regions of scarcity. The British met this problem by (1) building a network of roads, such as the Grand Trunk to the northwestern frontier; (2) constructing an extensive canal system; and (3) building railroads which became India's substitute for rivers. In 1870, there were 4,000 miles of track; by 1939, the mileage had risen to 41,000.

Language and education—Finally, the English language and an English educational system contributed to the unification of India. In 1835 English was established as the official language of the country. Also a string of universities were established and modeled after those in England. English education became the badge of an educated man, and there was created, as an English official put it, "a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect." Just as Latin had once been the language of cultured men in medieval Europe, so now English became the language of educated men in India. And just as Latin had

* Quoted in L. S. S. O'Malley, *Modern India and the West* (London, Oxford University Press, 1941), from Bishop J. M. Thobuon, *India and Malaysia* (1893).

given unity to medieval Europe, so English now helped to unite modern India.

An Indian Text

The British rule was inimical to the interests of almost all sections of Indian society. The peasants were suffering under the new land-tenure systems introduced by the British. The Indian industrialists were not happy because of the economic policy of the British government. For example, all import duties on cotton textiles were removed in 1882, which harmed the nascent Indian textile industry. The educated people suffered because they were discriminated against. Almost all sections of Indian society realized that their interests were antagonistic to British rule. The people of India became aware of the fact that the development of their country was not possible unless British rule was ended. All these factors forged the people of India into a nation, and this consciousness expressed itself in the struggle for national independence.

Several other factors helped in the growth of national consciousness among Indian people. The exploitation of India by the British rulers worsened the condition of the already impoverished masses. There was a series of famines, which took a toll of millions of human lives, due to the indifference of the autocratic British administration. The British government made use of Indian resources to pursue its imperialist aims in other parts of Asia. The Governor-General (now also the Viceroy) was the supreme authority in the country, responsible only to the British Parliament thousands of miles away. He was assisted by executive and legislative councils, which consisted of persons, mostly Englishmen, appointed by him. The Indian people had no say in the administration of the country. The Indian Civil Service, which ran the administration of the country, also consisted mostly of Englishmen. Though Indians could appear for competitive examinations, it was difficult for them to get selected. The examinations were

Social Studies, a Textbook for Secondary Schools (New Delhi: The National Council of Educational Research & Training, 1969), pp. 282–83.

held in England, and few could afford to appear for them. Indians were put to a further disadvantage when the minimum age for examination was reduced from 21 to 19 years.

Another factor was the practice of racial discrimination. Before the revolt of 1857, many Englishmen, officials and others, associated with Indians on the social level. After the revolt, the feeling of racial superiority grew, and everything Indian appeared inferior and barbaric to them. There were exclusive clubs and railway coaches for Europeans where the entry of Indians was prohibited. As Jawaharlal Nehru put it, "India as a nation and Indians as individuals were subjected to insult, humiliation, and contemptuous treatment." The feeling of racial superiority may be seen from the failure of the Ilbert Bill in 1883. The bill sought to bring Indians and Europeans on a par as far as the criminal jurisdiction of courts was concerned and to withdraw the privilege enjoyed by Europeans of being

The uprising of 1857: was it a mutiny or a war of independence? Here Indian participants in the rebellion are about to be shot from cannons by their British captors. (Culver Pictures, Inc.)

tried by a judge of their own race. The Europeans launched an agitation against the bill, and it was withdrawn.

The British government consistently followed a policy of repression after 1857. Many measures of the government provoked widespread agitation. Two of these were the Vernacular Press Act of 1878 and the Arms Act of 1879. The former act imposed severe restrictions on the freedom of the press and the latter forbade the possession of arms by Indians.

Thus, various factors contributed to the rise of the nationalist movement. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the movement started assuming an all-India nature. Beginning with the demand for small concessions, the nationalist movement in a few years became a movement for the complete independence of India.

The Indian People Awaken

Editors' Introduction

"The important thing is not to fight for freedom, but to fight to improve ourselves. Then freedom will come and we shall be worthy of it, as we were before."

I digested this thoughtfully.

"That is what Bapu [Gandhi] says, isn't it, that if we live and think rightly, we shall be free? But suppose we go on living rightly and still don't get our freedom."

"Then freedom cannot be worth having," said Papu [Father] with finality. "If the cause for which we fight is a great one, then we must be worthy of it."*

The middle decades of the twentieth century have seen country after country in Asia and Africa win their freedom from their colonial "masters." Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Indonesia, Vietnam, Burma, and India, to name just a few, have all achieved self-rule in the past thirty years. India led the way. The next four selections focus on aspects of India's struggle for independence.

British colonialism kept Indians from determining the course of their own lives, but at the same time it brought new ideas to India which nurtured the concept of independence. The Indian independence movement grew in part out of the renaissance of traditional Hindu values.

The first great intellectual movement occurred in Bengal. The following reading, by Prime Minister Nehru's niece, suggests some of the

Nayantara Sahgal, *Freedom Movement in India*, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 1970, pp. 22-27.

*Nayantara Sahgal, *Prison and Chocolate Cake* (Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1954), p. 45.

ways Hindu thinkers used western ideas and traditional Indian values in forming the intellectual basis for the nationalist movement. What ideas from the west did the leader draw upon? What traditional Indian ideas have been revitalized? In what ways is tradition interacting with modernity?

THE COMING of the English had far-reaching effects on India. One of these was the expansion of English education. It proved to be the first step towards independence because it gave rise to a new English-educated class—lawyers, businessmen, journalists and professors, who were destined to become the leaders of the national movement. English gave Indians a common language and through it a feeling of unity and nation-consciousness. Macaulay, who fathered this scheme of education, can be regarded as one of the founders of modern India.

What Macaulay did was revolutionary. He planned the conquest of India through the English language. Until then, all invaders had been absorbed into the Indian scene. Macaulay saw English education as a means of absorbing India into the English scene. He believed that Indians would thus become attached to British ideas and institutions....

By 1857 universities had been established at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, but even before this the rapid spread of English brought vital new currents of thought to India from the Western world that began to stimulate Indian thinking. Bengal took the lead in this stir of ideas.... The first of the reformers was Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the most distinguished Hindu of his time.

Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) was born and brought up a Brahmin, but he was educated—like all Hindus who wanted to enter public service—in Islamic culture and was a scholar of Arabic and Persian. After he entered the service of the East India Company, he began to study English which opened the whole world of Western thought to him. Christianity attracted him greatly, too, and he made a serious study of Hebrew and Greek in order to understand it better. After much study and heartsearching he decided that what his people needed was not Christianity, but a new understanding of their own traditions. His decision was the beginning of a Hindu reformation without which the emergence of India as a modern nation would never have been possible. His contribution to it was the founding in 1828 of the Brahmo Samaj,

an organization through which he tried to combine what he admired of enlightened Western ideas with the philosophy of the Hindu scriptures.

His Brahmo Samaj was founded to cleanse Hinduism of superstition, to fight the evils of caste, polygamy and other customs, to raise the status of women, and to bring a modern, Western approach to India's problems.

A wave of reform entered Hinduism from other directions too. Swami Dayanand Saraswati established the Arya Samaj in the Punjab with the purpose of uniting all Hindus under the philosophy of the Vedas, for he believed that the Vedas represented the highest doctrines of Hinduism. India, he felt, could only be reborn through the revival of her ancient Hindu ideals....

The Vedanta movement found its greatest leader in Swami Vivekananda,... Vivekananda believed that the Vedas had a message not only for the Hindus but for all mankind. He trained a body of missionaries to spread this message and Vedanta philosophy became known all over the world. Vivekananda's own personality made a vivid impression on his countrymen and on those he met on his journeys abroad. He strongly urged Hindus to rise above the religion of the "cooking pots" and to live according to the fearless and noble ideals of the Vedas. His lectures and writings acted as a tonic to his audiences and shocked them out of their apathy. Educated Hindus realized they had a heritage to be proud of and that there was no need to be apologetic about their religion.

There was another aspect to the Hindu reformation besides its re-discovery of the Vedas. This was the revival of interest in the *Bhagavad Gita*. The reformation by itself would probably have remained a religious movement. New interpretations of the Gita broadened it into a social and political movement as well. A whole generation of scholars set about trying to interpret it as a scripture that called for action for the welfare of the community. They chose to do this through the Gita because among all the scriptures it had long been looked upon by every Hundu sect as the most authoritative book on Hindu philosophy. So the Gita, one of the oldest and most sacred books of Hinduism, became

the gospel of the modern age with a message calling for social and political action. Leading personalities, Aurobindo Ghosh and Tilak, and later Rajagopalachari, Mahatma Gandhi and Radhakrishnan wrote commentaries on it, and numerous popular versions of it in the Indian languages and in English reached the reading public.

So after many hundred years Hinduism began to play a vigorous, positive role in the country's life and to influence every aspect of reform. It was the activity of these religious reformers that led to social changes such as the abolition of child marriage, the remarriage of widows, the relaxation of caste and concern for the untouchables—all measures that struck at the heart of Hindu orthodoxy. Early nationalist feeling was, therefore, based on religion and its reform.

And Then Gandhi Came

Editors' Introduction: At first the Indian nationalist movement was restricted to members of upper-class and upper-caste families, many of whom participated in the Bengali renaissance of Hinduism. Sons of these families sailed to Great Britain to take the civil service exam to qualify for government jobs. Many failed but stayed on in England to study law and later returned to India to work as lawyers and contribute to the independence movement.

The Indian National Congress, the organizational arm of the Indian independence movement, was established in 1885. At first it was composed largely of these educated, upper-class Indians. In its early years, its primary objective was for India, "in the course of time," to form a government "similar to what exists in the self-governing Colonies of the British Empire." Leaders of the Congress felt that whatever advances India made "must be within the Empire itself" and that these advances must be made gradually, by "reasonably cautious steps."

This moderate approach, which urged cooperation with Britain, was led by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a Brahmin and a former schoolteacher, who urged his countrymen to work constructively for their country rather than just to make political demands of the British. Soon another voice was heard: Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a militant nationalist. "*Swaraj* [self-government] is my birthright," he stated, "and I mean to have it." Tilak believed that it was useless to appeal to the British for reforms in India. He told his fellow Indians: "Your industries are ruined utterly, ruined by foreign rule; your wealth is going out of the country, and you are reduced to the lowest level, which no human being can occupy.... The remedy is not petitioning but boycott."

Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, Anchor Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, NY, 1959, pp. 274-275. Reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc.

Tilak based his approach on the fact that there were relatively few Englishmen in India. The whole bureaucracy was in Indian hands. The Indians therefore did not need arms to cripple the British rule; the means lay in refusing to cooperate with it.

Either approach, however, had to have a wider base than the educated upper class. One of the early tasks of the nationalist movement was to incite the masses, to fill them with a sense of national pride and power. Larger and larger crowds began to turn out to hear speakers tell of India's greatness and protest British policy. A landmark of the movement was a meeting in 1919 at Amritsar, in North India, where citizens gathered to protest the passage of the Rowlatt Acts. These acts gave British judges and officials the power to arrest Indians suspected of agitation and to hold them without trial, to search houses without warrants, and to deny defendants the right of counsel. In many ways these acts were the antithesis of the rule of law that the British claimed to be introducing in India.

Over one thousand Indians gathered in a garden at Amritsar to protest the Rowlatt Acts. Indian soldiers under British command fired without warning on the crowd, killing several hundred.

When Indians learned of the massacre at Amritsar, they also learned that General Dyer, who led the British troops, had been praised for his actions by the House of Lords. Amritsar became a turning point in the struggle for freedom. A new spirit of determination was developing, and a new leader came into prominence: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

Gandhi, born in Gujarat in 1869 of middle-class parents, studied law in England before going to South Africa, where he worked for twenty years to improve the living conditions of Indians there. In 1914 he returned to India and several years later began to apply the techniques of nonviolent resistance to the cause of Indian independence.

In the next reading, India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, speaks about the difference Gandhi's leadership made to the Indian people. In what ways does he sound like a "modern leader"? In what ways does Gandhi seem to be building on existing Indian traditions and values?

We seemed to be helpless in the grip of some all-powerful monster; our limbs were paralyzed, our minds deadened. The peasantry were servile and fear-ridden; the industrial workers were no better. The middle classes, the intelligentsia, who might have been beacon lights in the enveloping darkness, were themselves submerged in this all-pervading gloom....

What could we do? How could we pull India out of this quagmire of poverty and defeatism which sucked her in?

And then Gandhi came. He was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths, like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes, like a whirlwind that upset many things but most of all the working of people's minds. He did not descend from the top; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India, speaking their language and incessantly drawing attention to them and their appalling condition. Get off the backs of these peasants and workers, he told us, all you who live by their exploitation; get rid of the system that produces this poverty and misery.

Political freedom took new shape then and acquired a new content. Much that he said we only partially accepted or sometimes did not accept at all. But all this was secondary. The essence of his teaching was fearlessness and truth and action allied to these, always keeping the welfare of the masses in view. The greatest gift for an individual or a nation, so we had been told in our ancient books, was *abhaya*, fearlessness, not merely bodily courage but the absence of fear from the mind. Chanakya and Yagnavalka had said, at the dawn of our history, that it was the function of the leaders of a people to make them fearless. But the dominant impulse in India under British rule was that of fear, pervasive, oppressing, strangling fear; fear of the army, the police, the widespread secret service; fear of the official class; fear of laws meant to suppress, and of prison; fear of the landlord's agent; fear of the moneylender; fear of unemployment and starvation, which were always on the threshold. It was against this all-pervading fear that Gandhi's quiet and determined voice was raised: Be not afraid.

"Burn the Foreign Cloth"

Editors' Introduction: Prime Minister Nehru spoke of the spirit that Gandhi brought to the Indian nationalist movement. Gandhi's approach to conflict and politics—the use of non-violent protest—was unique on the world scene at the time; since then it has been emulated by such men as Dr. Martin Luther King, the American civil rights leader.

Gandhi took traditional Indian practices like fasting and non-violence and gave them new meaning as political weapons against the British. Dressed in only a loin cloth or sheet, he came before the Indian masses and talked of loving your enemies. Little wonder that Gandhi seemed strange and even comical to the British, but he struck a responsive chord in the Indians who soon perceived him as the leader of the nationalist movement.

Gandhi understood the importance of involving the people in tangible protest and action, of making nationalism immediate. It was his call for a national day of mourning and *hartal* (general strike) to protest the Rowlatt Act which had led to the meeting in Armitsar. In 1920 Gandhi proposed a nationwide campaign of noncooperation. One of its aims was to persuade Indians to boycott British-made cloth.

For many Indians, the Indian textile industry was symbolic of all the evils of British colonial rule. English traders had originally come to India to buy Indian goods such as textiles from "the Lancashire of the East." Gradually, however, it became more desirable to buy only the raw material from India, process it in England, and ship the manufactured goods back to India, to be sold at great profit. When the British recognized industrial development in India as a potential threat to this

R. K. Narayan, *Swami and Friends and the Bachelor of Arts* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1954). Reprinted by permission of William Morris Agency, Inc. Copyright 1954 by R. K. Narayan and Michigan State University Press. *Swami and Friends* is available in a Fawcett Premier Edition.

system, they placed heavy taxes on textile machinery shipped to India. At the same time, Indian cloth exported to England was subject to duty as high as 80 per cent of value. Certain "transit duties" were also imposed on indian cloth sent from one part of India to another. No duties of any kind were placed on British-manufactured cloth, and roads and railways were developed in India so that British goods could be sold in even remote villages.

The Indian textile industry collapsed and so did the manufacture of metal, glass, and paper. Countless weavers and other artisans were thrown out of work and forced to return to the land, which could not support them and their families. Many starved to death. An English Governor-General reported in 1834, "The misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton-weavers are bleaching the plains of India."

As a result of British war needs in World War I, Indian industries were allowed to develop. To dramatize the urgency of the need to become self-sufficient (and to undercut the British in the process), Gandhi urged his people to make their own cloth and not to wear any foreign cloth. But national pride and awareness of the possibilities in such political methods as boycott came slowly to the masses of Indians.

The following selection suggests how two young South Indian boys reacted to these new ideas. Swaminathan and his friend Mani are characters in a novel by R. K. Narayan. Why does Swaminathan burn his cap?

ABOUT TWO THOUSAND citizens of Malgudi assembled on the right bank of Sarayu to protest against the arrest of Gauri Sankar, a prominent political worker of Bombay. An earnest-looking man clad in *khaddar* [homespun cloth] stood on a wooden platform and addressed the gathering. In a high, piercing voice, he sketched the life and achievements of Gauri Sankar, and after that passed on to generalities: "We are slaves today," he shrieked, "worse slaves than we have ever been before. Let us remember our heritage. Have we forgotten the glorious periods of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*? This is the country that has given the world a Kalidasa, a Buddha, a Sankara. Our ships sailed the high seas, and we had reached the height of civilization when the Englishman ate raw flesh and wandered in the jungles nude. But now what are we?" He

paused and said on the inspiration of the moment, without troubling to verify the meaning: "We are slaves of slaves."

To Swaminathan, as to Mani, this part of the speech was incomprehensible. But five minutes later the speaker said something that seemed practicable:

"Just think for a while. We are 336 millions, and our land is as big as Europe minus Russia. England is no bigger than our Madras Presidency and is inhabited by a handful of white rogues and is thousands of miles away. Yet we bow in homage before the Englishman! Why are we become, through no fault of our own, docile and timid? It is the bureaucracy that has made us so, by intimidation and starvation. You need not do more. Let every Indian spit on England, and the quantity of saliva will be enough to drown England. . . ."

"*Gandhi ki Jai* [Victory to Gandhi]!" shouted Swaminathan involuntarily, deeply stirred by the speaker's eloquence at this point. He received a fierce dig from Mani, who whispered: "Fool! Why can't you hold your tongue?"

Swaminathan asked: "Is it true?"

"Which?"

"Spitting and drowning the Europeans."

"Must be. Otherwise do you think that fellow would suggest it?"

"Then why not do it? It is easy."

"Europeans will shoot us, they have no fears," said Mani. This seemed a satisfactory answer, and Swaminathan was about to clear up another when one or two persons sitting around frowned at him.

For the rest of the evening Swaminathan was caught by the lecturer's eloquence; so was Mani. With the lecturer they wept over the plight of the Indian peasant; resolved to boycott English goods, especially Lancashire and Manchester cloth, as the owners of those mills had cut off the thumbs of the weavers of Dacca muslin, for which India was famous at one time. What muslin it was, a whole piece of forty yards could be folded and kept in a snuff box! The persons who cut off the thumbs of such weavers deserved the worst punishment possible. And Swaminathan was going to mete it out by wearing

only *khaddar*, and rough homespun. He looked in chagrin at the dress he was just then wearing. "Mani," he said in a low voice, "have you any idea what I am wearing?"

Mani examined Swaminathan's coat and declared: "It is Lancashire cloth.". . .

"What are you wearing?" asked Swaminathan.

"*Khaddar*, of course. Do you think I will pay a pie to those Lancashire devils? No. They won't get it out of me."

Swaminathan had his own doubts about this statement. But he preferred to keep quiet, wishing that he had come out nude rather than in what he believed to be Lancashire cloth.

A great cry burst from the crowd: "*Bharat Matha ki Jai* [Victory to Mother India]!" And then there were cries of "*Gandhi ki Jai!*" After that came a kind of mournful "national" song. . . . Suddenly the darkness was lit up by a red glare. A fire was lighted. A couple of boys wearing Gandhi caps went round begging people to burn their foreign cloth. Coats and caps . . . came whizzing through the air and fell with a thud into the fire, which purred and crackled and rose high, thickening the air with smoke and a smell of burning. People moved about like dim shadows in the red glare. Swaminathan was watching the scene with little shivers of joy going down his spine. Somebody asked him: "Young man, do you want our country to remain in eternal slavery?"

"No, no," Swaminathan replied.

"But you are wearing a foreign cap."

Swaminathan quailed with shame. "Oh, I didn't notice," he said and, removing his cap, flung it into the fire with a feeling that he was saving the country.

The Salt March

Editors' Introduction: As more and more Indians became aware of the possibility of independence, they also began to realize that Gandhi was calling for a very special method to obtain this freedom. Gandhi not only wanted his people to protest against unjust laws, he wanted them to break these laws, openly and publicly, and to be prepared to go to prison as a result. Moreover, he wanted them to act without hate or violence. "Nonviolence," Gandhi believed, "is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind."

This "greatest force" was at the disposal of womankind as well. When wars are decided by violence, men are better equipped to win the battles. But when the struggle is to be waged by nonviolence and sacrifice, women are the equal of men. Thousands upon thousands of women joined the cause, leaving the courtyard and walking beside the men in their saffron-colored saris. Their participation in protests similar to the one described in the next reading greatly contributed to the emergence of women as full participants in the political life of India.

The British establishment of the manufacture of salt as a government monopoly was another of the unjust laws Gandhi challenged. Gandhi understood the universal importance of salt and knew that a tax on it would burden even the poorest Indian. He decided to lead a march to the sea to obtain salt illegally as a symbol of India's desire to control her own destiny. He wrote to the British viceroy announcing his intention to break the law. For twenty-four days he and his followers walked through villages to the sea. There they broke the salt law and urged their countrymen to do likewise.

Villagers all along the coast started to make salt, and others followed Gandhi's example of marching to the sea. Many, including Gandhi, were arrested and imprisoned, but the protest con-

tinued. The following selection is a report on the salt marches, from two news accounts by observers. What did nonviolence mean to the protesters? What effect did it have on the police? On British policy and prestige?

"I Found No Peace"

THE SHEDS WERE literally swarming and buzzed like a beehive with some 2,500 Congress of Gandhi men dressed in the regulation uniform of rough homespun cotton *dhotis* and triangular Gandhi caps [ready to break the salt law]. . . .

Mme. Naidu called for prayer before the march started, and the entire assemblage knelt. She exhorted them: "Gandhi's body is in jail but his soul is with you. India's prestige is in your hands. You must not use any violence under any circumstances. You will be beaten but you must not resist; you must not even raise a hand to ward off blows." Wild, shrill cheers terminated her speech.

Slowly and in silence the throng commenced the half-mile march to the salt deposits. A few carried ropes for lassoing the barbed-wire stockade around the salt pans. About a score who were assigned to act as stretcher-bearers wore crude, hand-painted red crosses pinned to their breasts; their stretchers consisted of blankets. Manilal Gandhi, second son of Gandhi, walked among the foremost of the marchers. As the throng drew near the salt pans they commenced chanting the revolutionary slogan, "*Inquilab sindabad*" [Long live freedom], intoning the two words over and over.

The salt deposits were surrounded by ditches filled with water and guarded by 400 native Surat police in khaki shorts and brown turbans. Half a dozen British officials commanded them. The police carried *lathis*—five-foot clubs tipped with steel. Inside the stockade twenty-five native riflemen were drawn up.

In complete silence the Gandhi men drew up and halted a hundred yards from the stockade. A picked column advanced

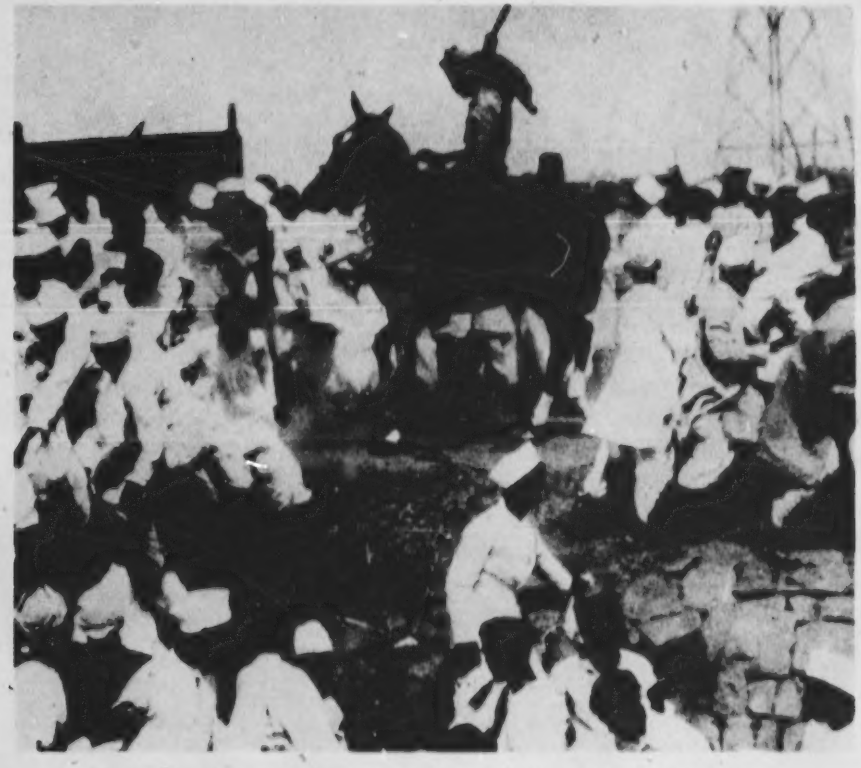
Webb Miller, *I Found No Peace* (New York: Simon & Schuster). Copyright © 1936 by Webb Miller. Reprinted by permission of Simon and Schuster, Inc.

from the crowd, waded the ditches, and approached the barbed-wire stockade, which the Surat police surrounded, holding their clubs at the ready. Police officials ordered the marchers to disperse under a recently imposed regulation which prohibited gatherings of more than five persons in any one place. The column silently ignored the warning and slowly walked forward. . . .

Suddenly, at a word of command, scores of native police rushed upon the advancing marchers and rained blows on their heads with their steel-shod *lathis*. Not one of the marchers even raised an arm to fend off the blows. They went down like tenpins. From where I stood I heard the sickening whacks of the clubs on unprotected skulls. The waiting crowd of watchers groaned and sucked in their breaths in sympathetic pain at every blow.

Those struck down fell sprawling, unconscious or writhing in pain with fractured skulls or broken shoulders. In two or three minutes the ground was quilted with bodies. Great patches of blood widened on their white clothes. The survivors without breaking ranks silently and doggedly marched on until struck down. When everyone in the first column had been knocked down stretcher-bearers rushed up unmolested by the police and carried off the injured to a thatched hut which had been arranged as a temporary hospital.

Then another column formed while the leaders pleaded with them to retain their self-control. They marched slowly toward the police. Although everyone knew that within a few minutes he would be beaten down, perhaps killed, I could detect no signs of wavering or fear. They marched steadily with heads up, without the encouragement of music or cheering or any possibility that they might escape serious injury or death. The police rushed out and methodically and mechanically beat down the second column. There was no fight, no struggle; the marchers simply walked forward until struck down. There were no outcries, only groans after they fell. There were not enough stretcher-bearers to carry off the wounded; I saw eighteen injured being carried off simultaneously, while forty-two still lay bleeding on the ground awaiting stretcher-bearers. The blankets used as stretchers were sodden with blood. . . .



A mounted policeman scattering salt marchers. (Wide World Photos)

Finally the police became enraged by the nonresistance, sharing, I suppose, the helpless rage I had already felt at the demonstrators for not fighting back. They commenced savagely kicking the seated men in the abdomen and testicles. The injured men writhed and squealed in agony, which seemed to inflame the fury of the police, and the crowd again almost broke away from their leaders. The police then began dragging the sitting men by the arms or feet, sometimes for a hundred yards, and throwing them into ditches. One was dragged to the ditch where I stood; the splash of his body doused me with muddy water. Another policeman dragged a Gandhi man to the ditch, threw him in, then belabored him over the head with his *lathi*. Hour after hour stretcher-bearers carried back a stream of inert, bleeding bodies.

"We Cover the World"

One of the bravest things I have ever seen was the way those Hindus marched out on the field and grouped themselves in little knots. Hindus hate physical pain, but they knew what they were in for that day. Some of them quite confidently believed that they would soon be dead. In each group the Indian women, in their orange robes of sacrifice, made a thin ring around the men. They would have to be hit first. . . .

In a few seconds that field was a shambles of reeling, bleeding men; . . . women shrieking and tearing at the policemen's clothes . . . throwing themselves before the swishing *lathis*. . . .

The Sikh leader was like that statue of the gladiator in Rome; a Herculean man, with his beard tied to his ears. He was being struck on the head. I stood about six feet from him and watched. He was hit until his turban came undone and his topknot was exposed. A few more blows and his hair came undone and fell down over his face. A few more and blood began to drip off his dangling black hair. He stood there with his hands at his sides. Then a particularly heavy blow and he fell forward on his face. . . .

I could hardly hold myself back. I wanted to grab that white sergeant's *lathi*. I stood next to him: he was so sweaty from his exertions . . . I watched him with my heart in my mouth. He drew back his arm for a final swing, . . . and he dropped his hands down by his side.

"It's no use," he said, turning to me with half an apologetic grin. "You can't hit a bugger when he stands up to you like that."

He gave the Sikh a mock salute and walked off.

J. Negley Farson, in *We Cover the World*, ed. by Eugene Lyons (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1937), pp. 142–43.

They Called Him Mahatma

Editors' Introduction: What would motivate people to allow themselves to be beaten and not hit back? The answer lies in the influence of one man: Mohandas Gandhi. The Indian people called him *Mahatma,* Great Soul. This was done without official ceremony; no government issued a proclamation and no university conferred a degree; but the name won universal acceptance. Albert Einstein said of Gandhi: "Generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth."

Gandhi did not consider himself a philosopher, but his ideas inspired a nation and had a profound impact on much of the world. He did not consider himself a politician, but his leadership of India's nationalist movement made him one of the most significant political personalities of the twentieth century. He was often skeptical of reform theories, yet he must be considered one of the greatest social reformers of all time. He was both traditional in his awareness of India's rich past and its value system and thoroughly modern in his conception of human rights.

Gandhi based his social philosophy on the premise that what was moral for the individual was moral for the society at large. His own quest for truth in action was his philosophy of social reform in India.

In the following selection a close associate of Gandhi speaks of Gandhi the man, Gandhi as nationalist leader, and Gandhi at his *ashram.* As you read it, try to discover some of the influences on Gandhi's philosophy, what Gandhi meant by *Satyagraha,* and

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whether or not Gandhi's approach has any relevance for us today in America.

GANDHI WAS TRULY a universal man. His ideas and philosophy were influenced by people and sources from all over the world. While studying in London, he read works of the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy and the American Henry David Thoreau. On the wall of his humble home hung the Sermon on the Mount from the New Testament. From his mother, Gandhi learned the *Ramayana* and other classical Indian stories and his beloved *Bhagavad Gita*. From the Indian villagers he loved, Gandhi learned a hard-headed practicality and resilience. His early experience in South Africa provided the setting for the development of his philosophy, which later was such an important factor in India's fight for independence.

Soon after he arrived in South Africa he was thrown out of his first-class accommodations on a train even though he had a first-class ticket. He was "colored." As he realized the inhumanity of the laws against blacks and colored, he decided he

Gandhi at his spinning wheel. (Information Service of India, New York)

must refuse to obey the laws and be willing to take the consequences, to "go to jail, if need be, or die." Other Indians living in South Africa joined him in resisting, "not by inflicting suffering on their enemy, but by inviting suffering on themselves, as a price for their disobedience." Submit not to evil, and take the consequences, was the central theme. Gandhi, and a few others, knew that a new weapon was born.

Gandhi searched his brain to find a name for his new weapon and to formulate its theory and practice. . . . His weapon had roots in Indian heritage. The ancient Vedas had a philosophy of suffering that brought divine as well as worldly results. Suffering, self-imposed and undergone in the spirit of grace, was an instrument of self-purification, and self-purification led to victory on a higher plane or even the highest. . . . To refuse to strike back and, at the same time, to refuse to submit is the height of dignity. To feel that the bully deprives one of one's dignity by physical abuse is to admit that one entrusts one's dignity to an outsider. Fundamental human dignity is part of one's character, and character cannot be changed by mere physical pressure. His weapon, therefore, was not for cowards and weaklings, claimed Gandhi. Were it a choice between cowardice and violence, he would prefer violence. More courageous than violence, argued Gandhi, was non-violence.

As the movement progressed in South Africa, Gandhi hit upon the idea of naming his new weapon of resistance *Satyagraha*. *Satya* means Truth in Sanskrit and implies love; *Agraha* means firmness, which engenders force; they combine to say "The Force which is born of Truth and Love, or Non-Violence." He also described it as "soul force" for those who found it difficult to pronounce the Sanskrit compound.

Borrowing the phrase of Henry David Thoreau, the New England recluse who fought against slavery by refusing to pay taxes to a government which practiced slavery, Gandhi called the particular stratagem of *Satyagraha* which he was employing against the South African government "civil disobedience." Only those who are otherwise willing to obey the law, insisted Gandhi, could have a right to practice civil disobedience against unjust laws. It was quite different from the behavior of

outlaws for it was to be practiced openly and after ample notice. It was not likely, therefore, to foster a habit of lawbreaking or to create an atmosphere of anarchy. And it was to be resorted to only when all other peaceful means, such as petitions and negotiations and arbitration, had failed to redress the wrong. . . .

Later on, in India, *Satyagraha* evolved into an intricate strategy of non-violent direct action, which differs from war insofar as the latter is violent direct action. It includes such stratagems as agitation, demonstrations, negotiations, and the seeking of arbitration. Then come such economic measures as sanctions, strikes, picketing, the general strike, commercial boycott, and sitdown strikes. Non-payment of taxes is another method of thwarting the powers that rule. Gandhi also went on hunger strikes to change the minds of his fellow Indians as well as that of the British government.

Gandhi's leadership in the independence movement, his presence, his simplicity and humility caused many Indians to look on him as a god. Once some villagers came to worship him because he had stopped near a well, long dried up, and water had started to flow.

"That is foolish and unbecoming of you," he told the group. "I have no more influence with God than you have. . . . Suppose what you say has happened. Surely it was a coincidence." He paused for a while, mending a broken thread. "Now take the instance of a crow who sits on a palm tree just at the moment the tree falls to the ground. Do you think that it was the weight of the crow which caused the tree's uprooting?"

Then Gandhi commanded them to go back to their homes, and admonished them not to waste time in speculating about his divinity but to use their time and energy to free Mother India.

When a man, during his lifetime, is looked up to by millions as a prophet—and that is the case with Gandhi—he is a great man. But when such a man has the humility to deny godhead, he is greater still.

But Gandhi lived very simply. When he was not leading some protest and was not in jail as a result of his civil disobedience, he stayed in an *ashram*, a hermitage-hospital. A typical day went like this.

Gandhi's is the smallest mud hut in a colony of mud huts and thatched roofs. To a Hindu even godliness is next to cleanliness, and so the hut is immaculate. Save for the palm-leaf mats, there is hardly any furniture in it. . . . This small sitting room is turned into a dining room at 11:00 A.M. punctually every day. Immediately after the meal, Gandhi goes through his voluminous mail and daily papers, and then takes his siesta. . . . Like Napoleon he falls asleep at a moment's notice and wakes up at the decided time, to the minute, without outside help.

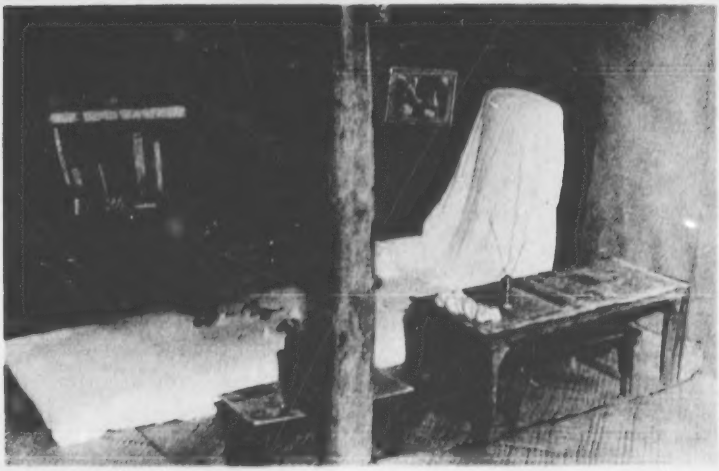
Then starts his endless string of interviews and conferences. Most of the time he reclines with a mud poultice on his abdomen, his own prescription for high blood pressure. For this purpose he prefers the Indian earth of which he is made. . . .

With religious regularity, an hour is devoted to spinning. To Gandhi, the spinning-wheel is both the symbol of his village reconstruction movement and an economic solvent for agrarian India. At five comes the final meal of the day, dates and nuts and curd. Then follows his evening walk. Quite often he utilizes it for his play with the children of Sevagram, who are perhaps his greatest source of delight and relaxation. . . .

The evening prayers are participated in by all members, and by people coming from surrounding villages. At the end Gandhi delivers a sermon, which can be on any subject from the illness of a member or a mistake of his wife's, to an announcement that he is about to launch a nationwide struggle against the British. . . .

Gandhi prefers to sleep on a cot out in the open or on a verandah. Years of imprisonment have taught him the art of stargazing, and he has made quite a study of heavenly phenomena. . . .

Gandhi gets up before the birds, at three, and concludes his thinking and reading while everything else is serene and quiet. . . . Then he goes methodically . . . through the daily



Gandhi's room at his ashram (above) *and his total worldly possessions* (below). (Information Service of India, New York)

ablutions without which a Hindu cannot touch any food. The morning prayer over, he takes his meager breakfast and then a morning walk, the nightmare of visiting foreigners, who do not relish it but who cannot bear the thought of being left out of what is reported to be Gandhi's most intimate hour.

Editors' Postscript: In Gandhi's final years he worked to promote harmony between Hindus and Muslims. During the partition riots that took so many lives in India and Pakistan, he walked the borders between the two communities and brought at least temporary peace wherever he went. His success in doing what armies and police could not do led one Englishman to call Gandhi, a "one-man peace-keeping force."

In his last days, Gandhi went to live in Delhi, where he held daily prayer meetings open to people of all faiths. Still committed to nonviolence despite what he had seen in his life-time, he continued to preach brotherhood and love.

Ironically, Gandhi, the man of peace, died at the violent hands of a young orthodox Hindu, who believed that the Mahatma had been too easy on the Muslims. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru voiced the reaction of the world to the assassination of the beloved leader: "The light has gone out."

The following passage, from a novel by an American, describes feelings shared by all sorts of Indians at the news of Gandhi's murder.

> Swiftly they came, silently, mournfully. Singly and in droves they came, the ragged and the rich, the aged and the young, Hindu and Muslim alike, the healthy and the lame. Those who could not walk were carried, supported by others, or they hobbled there on crutches, alone. Somehow all of them managed to find the way. Somehow all of them heard, as though heaven itself had carried the report, as though it were written on dusk's fading face—
>
> Our little father, Bapu, is dead.
>
> From every corner of the city they came, leaving dinners untouched, leaving doors unlocked, leaving possessions unguarded, leaving the petty problems and anxieties of their own petty lives behind them, forgetting themselves entirely, forgetting jealousy and fear, forgetting hatred and falsehood, elevated, united, if but for this moment, by the enormity of their loss, the immensity of their shame. . . .
>
> He had attained his liberation. He had become immortal, imperishable, one with God. No one feared for his salvation, for the destiny of his spotless soul. It was for themselves they mourned, for the loss of the best of their fellows, the wisest of their gurus, the gentlest father any nation had ever been privileged to call her own. It was the sin of their negligence that made them mourn, the burden of their guilt, the crime of their unworthiness. For no one felt entirely absolved.*

* Stanley Wolpert, *Nine Hours to Rama* (New York: Bantam Books, 1944). Permission granted by Random House, Inc.

Gandhi's influence did not die when he was assassinated. His belief in *Satyagraha* was adopted by an American from Alabama and forged into a weapon in the struggle for civil rights for black Americans. In the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott of 1957, Martin Luther King, Jr., first tried out his version of nonviolent resistance on a large scale. The success of this movement had the same impact on the American civil-rights movement that Gandhi's salt march had on the Indian nationalist movement.

Dr. King and Gandhi were both able to broaden support for their movements from a few intellectuals and lawyers to a large force made up of the common people. More important, both movements were geared to action instead of rhetoric. Dr. King, like Gandhi, had adversaries within the ranks who believed in a violent approach to reform. But Gandhi's methods proved successful against the British. Dr. King believed that they were relevant for America and the world. Speaking in India, he said:

> Mahatma Gandhi may be God's appeal to this generation, a generation drifting again to its doom. This eternal appeal is in the form of a warning: "Those that live by the sword shall perish by the sword." . . . What he taught (and his method throughout) reveals to us that there is an alternative to violence, and if we fail to follow this we will perish in our individual and in our collective lives.
>
> In a day when Sputniks and Explorers dance through the stratosphere, no nation can win a war. Today we no longer have a choice between violence and nonviolence; it is either nonviolence or nonexistence.

Indian Democracy: The Constitution

Editor's Introduction: India's leaders faced enormous challenges when they took control of their newly-independent nation. Not only did they have to raise the living standard of the average citizen, but they had to bring together diverse language groups and regional political units to form a unified nation.

The question was what kind of political system could best meet these challenges. India had a tradition of both dictatorial and democratic rule. The Moghul emperors and the Hindu rajas (kings) ruled with absolute power, but at the same time Indian villages for centuries had practiced a form of direct democracy called the Panchayat system (discussed in Vol. 1), and the British had left behind elements of democracy in the form of laws, electoral processes and political parties.

The Indian leaders, after fighting for decades against British colonial rule, chose to form a political structure that closely resembled the parliamentary democracy of Great Britian. As in other parts of the world, European colonialism in India not only produced resentment against outside control but it also passed on the democratic traditions practiced by the colonial power at home.

In drafting a constitution India not only drew upon the British political tradition but it also examined constitutions from around the world to identify elements that would suit its circumstances. Many of the fundamental rights guaranteed Indian citizens are modelled after the American Bill of Rights.

The following reading presents the "Fundamental Rights" of the Indian Constitution. It also presents the "Directive Principles of State Policy," which the framers of the Indian Constitution included to ensure economic as well as political justice. How could these two sections of the Constitution possibly conflict with each other? How similar or different is the Indian Constitution from that of the U. S.?

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

RIGHT TO EQUALITY

i. Equality before the law
ii. Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment
iii. Absence of any discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth
iv. Abolition of untouchability
v. Abolition of titles (except for academic or military distinctions)

RIGHT TO FREEDOM

i. Freedom of speech and expression
ii. Freedom to assemble peacefully
iii. Freedom to move throughout India
iv. Freedom to reside in any part of India
v. Freedom to form associations or unions

RIGHT AGAINST EXPLOITATION

i. Prohibition of forced labor
ii. Prohibition of traffic in human beings
iii. Prohibition of employment of children below fourteen in risky occupations

RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION

i. Freedom to worship
ii. Freedom to practise and propagate religion and to manage religious affairs

CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS

i. Freedom to conserve the script, language or culture of any section of citizens
ii. Freedom to establish educational institutions

RIGHT TO PROPERTY

i. Freedom to acquire property
ii. Right to receive compensation for property acquired for public purposes; the amount of compensation to be determined by the law authorising the acquisition of property

RIGHT TO CONSTITUTIONAL REMEDIES

Right to move courts for the enforcement of these rights

DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY

The Constitution also contains some principles which the State must follow both in law-making and in administration. According to these principles, the State should try to secure the social well-being of the people and establish social and economic democracy. The Constitution thus seeks to make India a Welfare State.

To achieve this aim, the State should strive

i. to see that all citizens have the right to an adequate means of livelihood
ii. to provide equal pay for equal work for both men and women
iii. to organize village panchayats
iv. to enact a uniform code for all citizens
v. to provide free and compulsory education for children till they are fourteen
vi. to raise the standard of living and to improve public health
vii. to organize agriculture and animal husbandry
viii. to protect monuments and places and objects of national importance
ix. to keep the functions of the executive and the judiciary separate
x. to promote international peace and security.

India's Parliamentary System

Editors' Introduction: Aside from guaranteeing individual rights and giving the states directives, the Indian Constitution calls for a democratically-elected parliamentary system on both the state and national level.

Never before had the democratic experiment been tried with such a large and diverse population, not to mention one where the majority of people could not read or write. Today India remains a democracy, the largest in the world with a population almost three times the size of the U.S.

INDIA'S GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE, as set out in the constitution that came into force on January 26, 1950, serves a federal union with parliamentary government both at the center and in the states. As in other parliamentary systems, the lower house of the central parliament—the Lok Sabha, or House of the People—is the key body, the cockpit of national policy making.

Cabinet ministers are drawn from the membership of the parliament and represent the party or coalition of parties that commands the support of the majority. The prime minister (or, in each of the states, the chief minister) holds the principal reins of power and authority.

Under the Indian constitution this Western-style system, modeled extensively on the British "mother of parliaments," is subject to certain restraints not usually found in states with a parliamentary form of government. Some of these have some-

Reprinted with permission from the Foreign Policy Association, *Headline Series*, no.214, "Understanding India," by Phillips Talbot.

what complicated the governing process, but on the whole they have added strength and resilience to it.

As in America, for example, the Indian constitution limits the authority of the central government and reserves certain powers to the individual states. The national parliament has sometimes found difficulty, therefore, in asserting over-all priorities, notably in policies involving restrictions on maximum agricultural holdings or taxes on land. Here the states have often managed to hold to their own positions. On the whole, however, the balance is definitely weighted in favor of the center, which under the constitution has broad powers of general taxation and of allocation of revenues to individual states as well as residual governing powers when needed.

In the extreme case, the president of India has the authority to supersede a state government when he doubts its capacity to govern. During periods of "president's rule," the governor of the state (appointed by the president) takes charge of its administration, and fundamental constitutional rights are suspended. This has happened on a number of occasions, usually either because political strife within a state has eroded the maintenance of law and order or because quarrels among contenders for the chief ministership have led to a legislative impasse. The constitution provides, however, that president's rule can be continued for no more than two months unless confirmed by the central parliament, which is empowered to extend it for six months at a time up to a maximum of three years. The constitution-makers anticipated, correctly, that within that period crises could be overcome either by accommodation or by fresh elections in a calmer atmosphere.

Yet it would be wrong to think of Indian center-state relationships as exclusively competitive. To work as well as it has, the system required large areas of cooperation.

What, in fact, has developed as the prevailing relationship between the center and the states is a dynamic tension, which has unquestionably helped keep India viable as a democratic nation. Given the country's vastness and diversity, a more tightly centralized system could be too rigid to satisfy the local and regional needs of the tens of millions of people in individ-

ual states. It would be more likely either to break of its own weight or to go authoritarian. Conversely, greater state autonomy could encourage the tendencies toward separatism that in some areas have already surfaced.

For survival, India has good reason to remain the well-knit federal union established by its constitution.

The Indian constitution also seeks to strike a balance between the powers of the state and the rights of individual citizens. It lists basic and specific "fundamental rights" to protect individuals against such restrictive age-old social customs as the practice of untouchability and of discrimination based on religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. While difficult to enforce in many ordinary daily situations, these injunctions have helped promote the national goal of equality of citizens before the law—an important concept in a society as traditionally hierarchical as India's. In addition, the constitution includes guarantees of freedom of speech and association along with guarantees against arbitrary arrest and detention. . . .

To Indian villagers, the higher structures of government, whether legislative or administrative, often seem remote and beyond influencing. Independent India has made concerted efforts, therefore, to introduce and strengthen forms of local self-government. Based on the traditional village *panchayats*, or councils, originally consisting of five persons, a new system called *panchayati raj* has been adopted by most of the states to provide popularly chosen institutions of government at the village, subdistrict and district levels. Theoretically, at least, these local institutions have substantial policy authority in development planning and the expenditure of funds within their jurisdictions. According to government figures, in 1970 *panchayats* were functioning in villages containing 98 per cent of the rural population.

In contrast to the governmental institutions, which owe so much to Western models, party politics is part of the warp and woof of Indian life. In many respects the principal Indian parties function, to be sure, like parties in other countries; they are well organized, they issue manifestos, they fight election campaigns with gusto, and some of them have such familiar

international labels as socialist or Communist. But the essential characteristic of Indian politics is its Indianness.

The political process is both new and old. It reflects both the new Indian dream of moving toward a secular society with equality of opportunity and the old reality of pervasive social and religious differences. Since independence, for the first time in history, Indian politics has been organized to involve ordinary villagers and townspeople in state and national elections without regard to their educational attainments, property holdings, or other restrictive qualifications. But caste affiliations have proved an important influence in party affiliations.

The postindependence constitution-drafters determined, after anxious debate, that, as a general principle in free India, every adult citizen should have the right to vote. When the first elections under the new constitution were held, in 1952,

Indian villagers line up to cast their ballots in the general election. (United Press International)

men and women across the country who had never before had an opportunity to vote trooped to the polls. Often dressed in their simple finest, many made a festive or even devotional experience of dropping their first ballot into a box marked with a bullock, a hut, a tree, or some other symbol to designate the party of the candidate of their choice.

For the Indian populace, including the millions of previously unenfranchised and generally disadvantaged parts of the community, the largest democratic polling process in the world brought new possibilities. Large numbers of the professional politicians were city-bred. They included many lawyers, accustomed to legalistic approaches. For the first time these party men had to direct their appeals to masses of rustic, illiterate voters. Some of the politicians who had come to scoff, quickly learned how readily the new voters discovered that a simple paper ballot could give them the beginnings of leverage in public affairs.

Testing Democracy

Editors' Introduction: The framers of the Indian Constitution were well aware of the problems that can arise when power is divided between the states and the central government as in India and the United States. Conflicts over "who controls what" are almost inevitable. The American Civil War was in part caused by such a conflict.

As one means to solve power disputes, the Indian Constitution provides for the dissolving of state governments and even the national parliament. There are three types of situations where democratic rule can be dismissed and replaced by "Emergency Rule:" (1) war, external aggression, or internal disturbances; (2) failure of state governments to maintain law and order; and (3) crises which threaten the financial credit or stability of the central government or any of the state governments.

The Indian Constitution has been used several times to suspend a state government but only once has the national parliament been suspended. In 1975, at the initiative of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, a "State of Emergency" was called and all democratic rights and processes throughout India were suspended for almost two years.

Why? The answer is not simple but at least part of it can be found in the actions of the prime minister herself. Born during the independence struggle as the only child of former prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi grew up in an atmosphere of political action. She worked closely with her father and served as his official hostess in the later years of leadership. (Her last name was acquired through marriage and is not related to the family of Mahatma Gandhi).

In 1967 Mrs. Gandhi won the general election as the candidate of her late father's party, the Congress, and became the first woman

Ved Mehta, *The New India*, New York: Penguin Books, 1978, pp. 162-163.

prime minister in Indian history. Many of the party leaders who supported Mrs. Gandhi expected her to be a weak leader, allowing them to rule from behind the scenes. But she surprised them all and became a very strong prime minister and an astute politician.

In 1969 she backed her own nominee for president of India against the choice of the Congress Party, and won. Her victory split the Congress and her wing became known as Congress I (for Indira).

Early in 1970, Mrs. Gandhi nationalized the banks and popularized the phrase *garabi hatoa* or "end to poverty." The slogan became the rallying cry for her lower-class supporters, raising their expectations that at long last the government and Gandhi Devi (Goddess Gandhi) were really going to help the poor.

During the same period, however, there were signs of serious unrest. Various groups expressed their discontent in almost daily strikes and protests. Peasant movements, student demonstrations and labor stoppages gained momentum. The rate of inflation increased, unemployment soared, and the black market flourished.

When the opposition mobilized sufficiently to threaten her possible re-election, the Prime Minister turned to the Emergency provision of the constitution which allows the president to suspend certain constitutional rights, thereby granting extraordinary powers to the Prime Minister.

From June 1975 to March 1977, Mrs. Gandhi ruled with almost absolute power. She imprisoned opposition members, muzzled the press, and dictated parliament's actions. Her son Sanjay became increasingly powerful and led campaigns to clean up the slums and accellerate birth control programs, especially sterilization operations.

In January 1977, Prime Minister Gandhi, hoping to gain voter support to legitimize her "Emergency Rule," surprised her opponents by calling for a national election. In one of India's most exciting political contests, she and Sanjay were both defeated in their bids for seats in parliament, and the Congress (I) was soundly defeated by the newly-formed Janata Party.

In the following selection, Ved Mehta, a well-known Indian journalist, gives his interpretation of who was responsible for Indira Gandhi's defeat. Why do you think he calls this vote "the most hopeful sign in recent years for the growth of democracy in a poor country?"

Mrs. Gandhi and her party were turned out of office primarily by the poor...

The rumors—a blend of fact and fiction—about the dire effects of the Emergency on the poor had for some time been travelling rapidly through the villages by word of mouth. It was

rumored, for instance, that the government was using the Emergency as an excuse to demolish the hutments of the poor, with the homeless poor being shipped out to prison labor camps in the desert—a rumor based on Sanjay's "beautification of the cities."

It was also rumored that the government was using the Emergency to drive rice, wheat, lentils, cooking oil, and soap off the market. In reality, such necessities had become scarce because their prices were held down during the Emergency.

It was said that the country was being run by "the boy"—people's derisive term for Sanjay—while venerated elders were in jail. In the years of the freedom struggle against the British raj, the poor had learned that the government could personify vice and that jail could personify virtue, and that a politican's most important credential could be his jail sentence, for there was hardly a major politican who had not once served some time in a British jail.

Above all, it was rumored that "the boy" was using the Emergency to castrate the poor much as village bulls were castrated to make bullocks—a rumor based on Sanjay's sterilization program. The villagers understood very little about the effects of vasectomies—hastily performed as they were by the government, with regard only for statistics. Superstitiously, people associated sterilization with sexual impotence, emasculation, and loss of life-giving energy and spiritual strength—an assault on their bodies, their families, and their religions. Relatively few of the poor had direct experience of vasectomies, but it seemed that a great many of them had heard of people who had undergone the operation and suffered disastrous consequences....

At the polls, the lines of the poor were longer, and there were larger numbers of frightened-looking men and women in them, than in any previous elections. Certainly a poor villager understood the meaning of the choice between dictatorship and democracy, between Emergency measures and democratic procedures, if only, perhaps, from his daily experience with the local constable and other petty officials. During the Emergency, these government functionaries, with no legal checks on their power, had become increasingly remote and arbitrary, exacerbating the villagers' customary fear of authority.

Editors' Postscript: India not only survived authoritarian rule but the Indian people voted it out in a democratic election. What is perhaps even more amazing, in January, 1980, Mrs. Gandhi was voted back into power and became prime minister once again.

The Janata Party, unable to deliver on its election promises, was in disarray by 1980. Critics were once again attacking the government for its inability to end poverty, to stop the country's economic drift, and for placing political interests above the interests of the people.

These factors plus Mrs. Gandhi's tireless campaigning produced an overwhelming victory, Mrs. Gandhi's third in four attempts.

Wanted: A National Language

Editors' Introduction: India has no fewer than fourteen official languages and hundreds of dialects. Not all the languages use the same script, as is evident from the *rupee* note reproduced below. "One *rupee*" is written in the center in thirteen Indian languages as well as English.

What should the official language of India be? What language should election ballots be printed in? Should it be Hindi, which is spoken by more than 200 million Indians? What about the 300 million people who do not speak it? How could they find work in

R. K. Narayan, "Fifteen Years," in *Next Sunday* (Bombay: Pearl Publication, 1960), pp. 14–17. © R. K. Narayan.

the government or pass national examinations? Indeed, South Indians who do not speak Hindi fear that the imposition of Hindi as a national language would lead to northern control of the nation. And what would happen to the literatures and cultures of non-Hindi-speaking people if Hindi became the official language?

Perhaps an obvious question must be asked here: Why does India need a national language? The answer is unity. How can a large country of diverse peoples be brought together if they cannot communicate? When people marry across linguistic lines, for example, the family often becomes bilingual or even trilingual.

A common language is necessary so that Indians from one area can speak to Indians from other areas. An article in *The Illustrated Weekly of India* dealt with this problem:

> The most difficult decision we have to make is with regard to a link language—maybe we shall not be deciding it for an indefinite period. There is a great deal of anger in the South over Hindi being "thrust" on its people. But the term "South" need not mean the entire area in which Dravidian languages are spoken. One feels there is not so much opposition to Hindi in Andhra, Mysore, and Kerala as in Tamil Nadu. There is also reason to hope that in the next fifty years Hindi will be accepted *unofficially* in the South. At any rate we cannot push Hindi as a common language—we must let it *evolve* as one.
>
> It is suggested that we have already a link language in English. Whatever unity there exists in India, it is claimed, is due to that language. If we rely on a foreign tongue for the preservation of our unity, then that unity is not worth having. In fact it is no unity at all, but a pathetic admission of the fears and suspicions prevailing between one part of India and another.*

Is English really a "foreign tongue" in India? It was the official language from 1835 to 1947. It is the language of Western science and technology. But fewer than 2 per cent of the Indian people are literate in English. In the following selection, R. K. Narayan, a famous South Indian novelist who writes in English, comments on some of the ambiguities in Indians' attitudes toward English. What arguments does he offer for making English official?

LANGUAGE HAS BECOME a profoundly embarrassing subject nowadays. The thought of it gives a peace-loving citizen a pain in the neck. I mean it with particular reference to the English

* R. K. K. "Wanted: A Revolution in Education," *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, February 11, 1973, p. 11. Reprinted with permission.

language. An average citizen today is in the position of appreciating the language but not wanting it. We are not so far away from the time when people used to say as a matter of prestige, "He speaks perfect English," and a bride who could write her letters in English and who could claim to have read Scott and Dickens was considered fully accomplished. In the matter of employment, too, a young man who could draft an English letter with ease and confidence stood a better chance of being employed than the one who was proficient only in the regional language. And there were people who didn't know English and who said with a sigh, "If I had only learned English I would have conquered the world—"

This may not be a very comfortable memory for anyone now, but it would be false to pretend that such values did not exist at one time. However, various causes, practical, political, etc., have demanded the abolition of English from our midst. It is almost a matter of national propriety and prestige now to declare one's aversion to this language and to cry for its abolition.

But the language has a sirenlike charm and a lot of persistence, and (if we may personify it) comes up again and again and demands, "What have I done that you hate me so much?" The judge does not lift up his head for fear that he might weaken. He assumes the gruffest tone possible and says, "You are the language of our oppressors. It is through you that our nation was enslaved, and it is only through you that the people were divided, so that those who were masters of English could rule others who didn't know the language. Your insidious influence wrought a cleavage in our own midst—"

"You speak very good English."

"Well, well, I won't be flattered by it," says the judge. "All of us are masters of English, but that proves nothing. You are the language of those who were our political oppressors. We don't want you any more in our midst. Please, begone."

"Where shall I go?"

"To your own country—"

"I am afraid this *is* my country. I fear I will stay here,

whatever may be the rank and status you may assign me—as the first language or the second language or the thousandth. You may banish me from the classrooms, but I can always find other places where I can stay. . . . I am more Indian than you can ever be. You are probably fifty, sixty, or seventy years of age, but I've actually been in this land for two hundred years."

"When we said, 'Quit India,' we meant it to apply to Englishmen as well as their language. And there doesn't seem to be much point in tolerating you in our midst. You are the language of the imperialist, the red-tapist, the diabolical legalist, the language which always means two things at the same time."

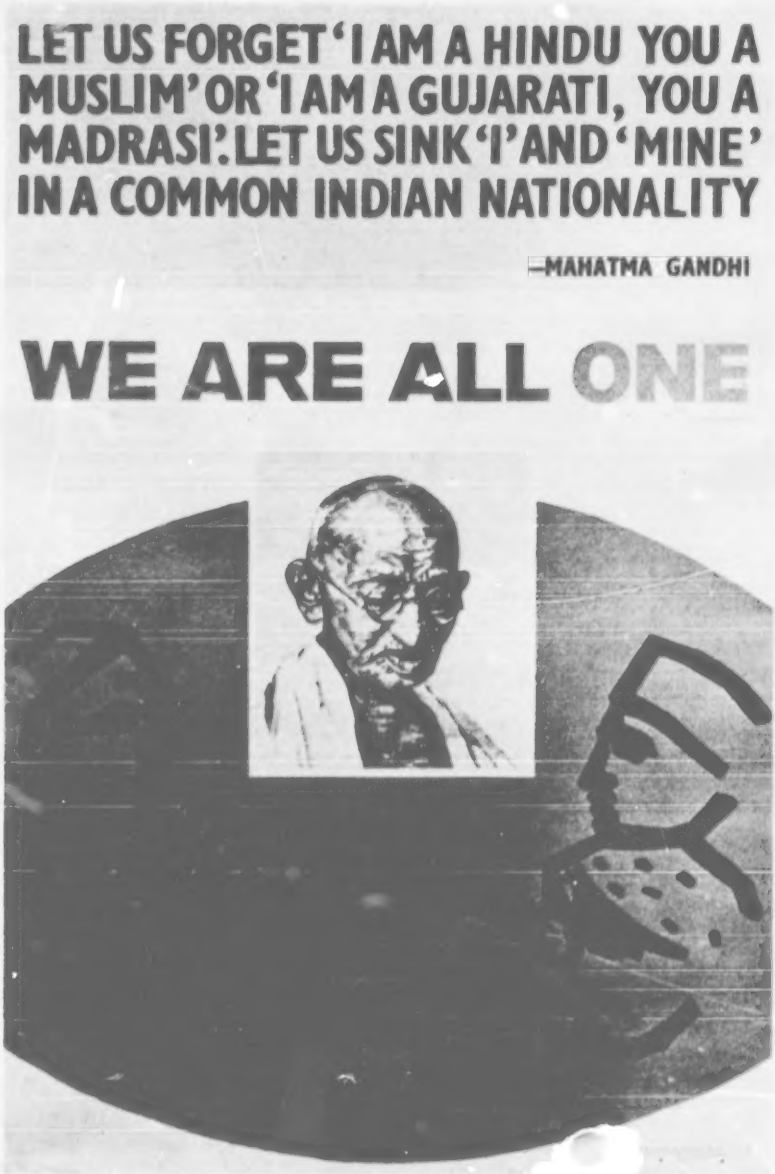
"I am sorry, but red tape, parliament, and courts have a practical purpose in having a language which can convey shades of meaning and not something outright. That reminds me: have you got the criminal and civil procedure codes in the language of the country now? . . ."

"You need not concern yourself with this problem. We want you to go. . . . The utmost we shall allow you will be another fifteen years. . . ."

"Fifteen years from what time?" asked the English language, at which the judge felt so confused that he ordered, "I will not allow any more discussion on this subject," and rose for the day.

Editors' Postscript: Something has to be done to resolve the language problem. One Indian remarks: "I can't stand speaking English. It makes us nervous and turns our voices falsetto, which never happens when we speak any tongue native to India. . . . How dreary it all sounds when a man talks an alien language. . . . When we speak English even elephants could not drag a jeweled metaphor out of us."

But what language should be chosen instead? Everyone has a different solution. A businessman speaks of Punjabi as "a quaint language, slow, indelicate, and lusty. . . . Punjabi excels in love and abuse. Its abuse is of the genealogical kind which can trace one's family history in the most revealing and incestuous terms." How different from Bengali, for example, as this passage by Dhan Gopal Mukerji suggests:


LET US FORGET 'I AM A HINDU YOU A MUSLIM' OR 'I AM A GUJARATI, YOU A MADRASI'. LET US SINK 'I' AND 'MINE' IN A COMMON INDIAN NATIONALITY
—MAHATMA GANDHI
WE ARE ALL ONE

(By M. Dutta Guptar, Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India)

> The first Bengali sentence that Calcutta spoke to me on my return was, "Come, amuse thyself with kind words; the day is young, and we all know that life is brief as a sparrow's hop." The speech of men is the ring of gold in which may shine the precious stone of Thought, and there is no speech as attractive as Bengali. . . .
>
> Of course, we Bengalis are tremendous talkers, but what a picturesque speech we utter! The best poet of India as well as the best scientist is a Bengali, and Jagadish Bose is as much of a poet . . . as Tagore is a scientist. So when I am accused of being a talkative Bengali I am complimented and I say to myself, "If you had such a tongue as mine you would talk also."

Kumrakudi Adigalar, a Tamil religious leader, claims that "Tamil, of all the languages of the world, is the most fit for the feeling of piety. Songs which melt the heart are only in Tamil." Can you imagine a man with these sentiments switching easily to Hindi or English as his language? How would you feel if you woke up tomorrow to find that Russian was your national language?

The language controversy has thus far defied solution. One proposal currently being considered is the so-called three-language formula. Under the terms of this plan, education would be conducted primarily in the regional languages, with Hindi as a required second language. English would be an "associate national language" for an unspecified period of time.

Language is only one aspect of diversity in India. As the poster on the previous page illustrates, there are also religious, ethnic and regional differences. One of Mahatma Gandhi's dreams was to create a common national identity. For this and for his leadership during the independence movement, he is often called "The father of the nation."

Economic Development: The Gandhian Way

Editors' Introduction: Since independence in 1947 the Indian government has been almost totally preoccupied with the issue of economic development, and with good reason. Despite enormous gains during the past 30 years, India remains one of the poorest countries in the world.

The average Indian earns less than $200 a year and can expect to live to the age of 52. About 70% of all Indians are illiterate and 50% live below the poverty line.

In 1981 India had a population of 685 million, more than three times the size of the United States but living on only one third the amount of land. After China (985 million), India is the most populous nation in the world.

Each year India adds about 14 million to its population, the equivalent of the total population of Australia. In four years it adds the equivalent of the population of France, and in ten years the equivalent of all of Western Europe. At its present rate of growth, India will double its population in 33 years; in 75 years it will have as many people as the whole world has today.

To provide schools, housing, medical care, food, and employment for such a large and rapidly-growing population, the Indian economy has to run simply to stand still; to move ahead—to improve the living standards of its people—it has to run even faster.

What is the best way for a country like India to develop economically? How can it most effectively use its resources to improve the living standards of *all* its people?

Debates about these questions have gone on for years and con-

Adapted from M. K. Gandhi, *India of My Dreams*, compiled by R. K. Prabhu, Hind Kitabs LTD Publishers, Bombay, 1947, pp. 22–29; and M. K. Gandhi, *Village Swaraj*, compiled by H. M. Vyas, Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1962, pp. 13–18.

tinue today; there are no easy answers. Many specialists feel that poor countries should modernize their economies by adopting Western science and technology, shifting from small- to large-scale agriculture and developing large centralized industries. In effect they are saying that a country like India needs more Detroits and Pittsburghs.

Not everyone agrees, however, and one of the first opponents of this Western model of development was Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi dreamed of an India of self-sufficient villages with decentralized industries. He was more interested in people fulfilling their moral and spiritual potential than their physical needs. Technology should serve people, he said; people should never have to serve the machine.

In the following reading, Gandhi outlines some of his ideas for village development. What are his goals for Indian villages? How would life in these villages differ from life in industrialized societies?

I have believed and repeated times without number that India is to be found not in its few cities but in its 700,000 villages. But we town-dwellers have believed that India is to be found in its towns, and the villages were created to minister to our needs, I have found that the town-dweller has generally exploited the villager. The village movement is as much an education of the city people as of the villagers. It is only when the cities realize the duty of making an adequate return to the villages for the strength and sustenance which they derive from them, instead of selfishly exploiting them, that a healthy and moral relationship between the two will spring up.

My idea of village Swaraj (self-rule) is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbors for its own vital wants and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is necessary. An ideal Indian village will be so constructed as to lend itself to perfect sanitation. It will have cottages with sufficient light and ventilation, built of a material obtainable within a radius of five miles of it. The cottages will have courtyards enabling the householders to plant vegetables for domestic use and to house their cattle.

The village lanes and streets will be free of all avoidable dust. It will have wells according ot its needs and accessible to all. It will have houses of worship for all; also a common meeting place, a village common for grazing its cattle, a co-operative dairy, primary and secondary schools in which industrial edu-

cation will be the central factor, and it will have village Panchayats for settling disputes. It will produce its own grains, vegetables and fruit, and its own Khadi (handwoven cotton cloth).

Khadi to me is the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality... Moreover, Khadi mentality means decentralization of the production and distribution of the necessities of life. Therefore, the formula so far evolved is, every village to produce all its necessaries and a certain percentage in addition for the requirements of the cities. Production of Khadi includes cotton growing, picking, ginning, cleaning, carding, slivering, spinning, sizing, dyeing, preparing the warp and the woof, weaving and washing. These, with the exception of dyeing, are essential processes. Every one of them can be effectively handled in the villages. I feel convinced that the revival of handspinning and hand-weaving will make the largest contribution to the economic and the moral regeneration of India. The millions must have a simple industry to supplement agriculture. Spinning was the cottage industry years ago, and if the millions are to be saved from starvation, they must be enabled to reintroduce spinning in their homes and every village must repossess its own weaver.

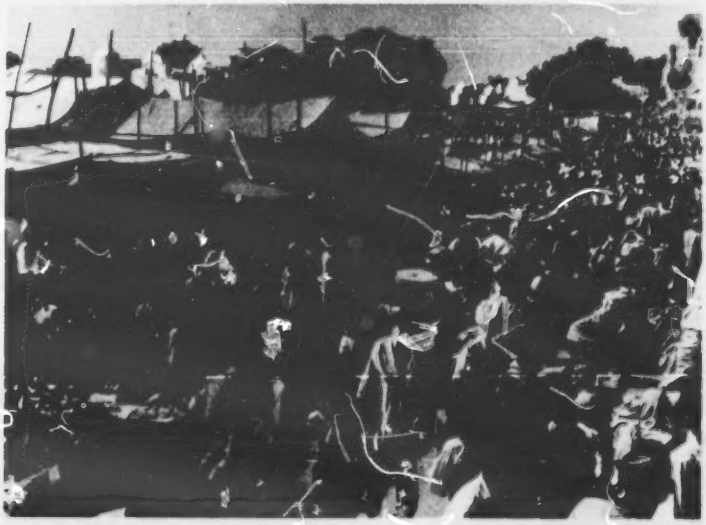
Mechanization is good when the hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when there are more hands than required for the work, as is the case in India. The problem with us is not how to find leisure for the teeming millions inhabiting our villages. The problem is how to utilize their idle hours, which are equal to the working days of six months in the year.

The revival of village industries is but an extension of the Khadi effort. Handspun cloth, hand-made paper, hand-pounded rice, home-made bread and jam, are not uncommon in the West. Only there they do not have one hundredth of the importance they have in India. For with us, their revival means life, their destruction means death. If the cloth manufactured in mills displaces village hands, rice and flour mills not only displace thousands of poor women workers but damage the health of the whole population in the bargain. Where people have no objection to taking flesh diet (eating meat) and can afford it, white flour and

polished rice may do no harm, but in India, where millions can get no flesh diet even where they have no objection to eating it if they can get it, it is sinful to deprive them of nutritious and vital elements contained in whole wheat and unpolished rice.

If rice can be pounded in the villages after the old fashion the wages will fill the pockets of the rice-pounding sisters, and the rice-eating millions will get some sustenance from the unpolished rice instead of pure starch which the polished rice provides. That branless wheat flour is as bad as polished rice. Whole wheat flour ground in one's own *chakki* (hand mill) is any day superior to and cheaper than, the fine flour to be had in the bazaars. According to medical testimony *gur* (raw sugar) is any day superior to refined sugar in food value.

My idea of society is that while we are born equal, meaning that we have a right to equal opportunity, all have not the same capacity. Every human being has a right to live, and therefore to find the wherwithal to feed himself and clothe and house himself. I want to bring about a equalization of status. Economic equality is the master key to non-violent independence. A non-violent system of government is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists.



The economic challenge in India is how to meet the needs of almost 600 million villagers.

Economic Development: The Nehru Way

Editors' Introduction: Despite Gandhi's place in Indian history and the worshipful attitude most Indians hold toward him, Gandhi's ideas on economic development have never been tried seriously in India. Instead, modern India has followed the path set out by its first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Nehru, who studied science in England, became convinced early in life that rapid, large-scale industrialization was India's best hope for creating a decent standard of living for all its citizens. Moreover, he believed that a "mixed economy," part socialism and part capitalism, was the best approach for poor developing countries. In this respect, India has become a model for many other countries.

When India gained her freedom in 1947, more than 85% of all the people worked in agriculture. Most individuals did not have enough extra money to save or invest. Therefore, the nation as a whole had little surplus capital to put into railroads, steel mills, mining and other large-scale heavy industries.

Nehru reasoned that the scarce resources available had to be put to the best use and not wasted on frivolous consumer goods. To solve this problem, Nehru copied the Soviet Union's example of government-owned-and-operated heavy industries. This approach allowed the government to shoulder the responsibility of accumulating the necessary capital and would also make certain that the most important industries would receive attention.

The large industries that were financed and run by the central government formed the socialistic part of the "mixed economy," commonly referred to as the "public sector" because it was controlled by the nation as a whole.

Adapted from *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches, 1949-53*, Publications Division, Government of India, New Delhi, pp. 93-96.

Smaller industries producing consumer goods such as bicycles, soft drinks, and candy bars were allowed to function as enterprises run by individuals. This part of the economy, the capitalistic side, was known as the "private sector."

In combining capitalism and socialism, Nehru hoped to encourage private initiative while at the same time introducing centralized planning. The purpose of such planning was to identify goals for the economy based on the needs of the country and then establish the necessary means to accomplish the goals. Following the lead of the Soviet Union once again, India adopted the technique of using five-year plans to organize its economic development. The first Indian five-year plan was drawn up in 1951. India is now in the middle of its fifth plan.

The following reading is part of a speech that Nehru gave to the Indian Planning Commission in 1950. What important differences do you see between Nehru's and Gandhi's dream of development? What besides industry does Nehru think is essential for development?

We are, all of us, working together to make a new India—not abstractly from a nation but for the 360 million people who are wanting to progress as individuals and as groups.

In fact, we are trying to catch up, as far as we can, with the Industrial Revolution that occurred long ago in Western countries and brought about great changes in the course of a century or more. That Revolution ultimately branched off in two directions which are, at present, represented by the high degree of technological development in the United States of America on the one hand and by the Soviet Union on the other.

These two types of development, even though they might be in conflict, are branches of the same tree. The Industrial Revolution has a long history from which we can learn many lessons. We are apt to think in terms of European history when we consider India. I do not understand why we should repeat the errors of the past. We must make an effort to learn from the past.

It is obvious that India must be industrialized as rapidly as possible. And industrialization includes, of course, all kinds of industry—major, middling, small, village and cottage. However rapid our industrialization may be, it cannot possibly absorb more than a small part of the population of this country in the next ten, twenty or even thirty years. Hundreds of millions will remain who have to be employed chiefly in agriculture. These

Prime Minister Nehru (lower right, wearing white cap) attends the christening of the first military truck manufactured in the public sector in 1959. (Press Information Bureau, Government of India).

people must, in addition, be given employment in smaller industries like cottage industries and so on. Hence, the importance of village and cottage industries.

I think the argument one often hears about big industry versus cottage and village industry is misconceived. I have no doubt that we cannot raise the people's level of existence without the development of major industries in this country; in fact, I will go further and say that we cannot even remain a free country without them. Certain things, like adequate defense, are essential to freedom and these cannot be had unless we develop industry in a major way.

But we must always remember that the development of heavy industry does not by itself solve the problem of the millions in this country. We have to develop the village and cottage

industry in a big way, at the same time making sure that in trying to develop industry, big and small, we do not forget the human factor. We are not merely out to get more money and more production. We ultimately want better human beings. We want our people to have greater opportunities, not only from an economic or material point of view but at other levels also.

We have seen in other countries that economic growth by itself does not necessarily mean human growth or even national growth. We have to keep this in mind and also remember that the growth of a nation has little to do with the shouting to be heard in the market places and the stock exchanges of the country. So, an integrated plan for the economic growth of the country, for the growth of the individual, for greater opportunities for every individual and for the greater freedom of the country, has to be drawn up and drawn up within the framework of political democracy.

Political democracy will only justify itself if it ultimately succeeds in producing these results. If it does not, it will have to yield to some other kind of economic or social structure which we may or may not like. Ultimately, it is the results that decide the structure a country will adopt. When we talk of political democracy, we must remember that it no longer has the particular significance it had in the 19th century, for instance. If it is to have any meaning, political democracy must gradually or, if you like, rapidly lead to economic democracy. If there is economic inequality in the country, all the political democracy and all the adult suffrage in the world cannot bring about real democracy.

Therefore, our object must be to put an end to all differences between class and class, to bring about more equality and a more unitary society—in other words, to strive for economic democracy. We have to think in terms of ultimately developing into a classless society. That may still be a far-off ideal; I do not know. But we must, nevertheless, keep it in view.

We, in this country, must not think of approaching our objectives through conflict and force. We have achieved many things by peaceful means and there is no reason why we should suddenly abandon that method and take to violence. There is a very special reason why we should not do so. I am quite con-

vinced that, if we try to attain our ideals and objectives, however high they may be, by violent methods we shall delay matters greatly and help the growth of the very evils we are fighting. India is not only a big country but a country with a good deal of variety; and if any one takes to the sword, he will inevitably be faced with the sword of someone else. This clash between swords will degenerate into fruitless violence and, in the process, the limited energies of the nation will be dissipated or, at any rate, greatly undermined.

Now, the method of peaceful progress is ultimately the method of democratic progress. Keeping in mind the ultimate aim of democratic thought, it is not enough that we should simply give our votes and leave everything else to look after itself. The ultimate aim is economic democracy. The ultimate aim is to put an end to the differences between the rich and the poor,

India's scientific community is now generally rated the third best in the world, after the United States and Japan. (United Nations).

between the people who have opportunities and those who have very few or none. Every obstacle in the way of that aim must be removed, whether it is in a friendly and co-operative way or by State pressure or by law. Nothing should be allowed to come between you and the achievement of that social objective.

Editors' Postscript: It has now been more than 34 years since Nehru put India on the path to industrialization through a "mixed economy." How has India fared? What problems remain?

The following update covers agriculture, industry, and the general standard of living—the areas Nehru considered most crucial to India's development.

Agriculture: The startling success of India in the field of agriculture during the last five years has impressed friends and foes of India alike.

During the last thirty years, India's population has doubled, but her food production has tripled. In 1960, India imported thousands of tons of grain each year; for the past five years she has imported no food grains, while both the Soviet Union and China must import food each year.

Fourteen million tons of grain has been set aside for years of poor harvest. Punjabi farmers, thanks to the "Green Revolution," now produce more wheat per acre than any farmers in the world.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

	1960–61	1965–66	1976–77	1977–78	1978–79
	Million Tons				
Foodgrains	82.0	72.3	111.2	126.4	131.4
Rice	34.6	30.6	41.9	52.7	53.8
Wheat	11.0	10.4	29.0	31.7	35.0
Other crops:					
Oilseeds	7.0	6.4	7.8	9.0	9.6
Tobacco	0.31	0.29	0.42	0.49	0.45
Cotton	5.6	4.9	5.8	7.2	7.9
Jute	4.1	4.5	5.4	5.4	6.5
Sugarcane	11.1	12.8	15.8	18.0	16.0
Tea	0.32	0.37	0.51	0.56	0.57
Coffee	0.04	0.06	0.10	0.13	0.11

IMPORTS OF FOODGRAINS

	Rice	Wheat	Others	Total
		'000 tons		
1961.....	384	3,092	19	3,495
1966.....	787	7,833	1,739	10,358
1974.....	—	4,203	671	4,874
1975.....	130	7,016	261	7,407
1976.....	149	5,832	534	6,516
1977.....	8	547	—	555

Note: There were no imports during 1978, 79, 80

Industry: India is the ninth largest industrial power in the world. Furthermore, it is self-sufficient in almost all areas. Indians can regularly purchase Indian made cola drinks, penicillin, razor blades, automobiles, television sets and cosmetics. India is also the largest film producer in the world.

Although not spectacular, India's growth rate has averaged about 3.7% in recent years and her balance of payments is currently in the best position since independence. India supplies electricity from modern nuclear reactors and has joined the nuclear club by exploding a "nuclear device" in 1974.

Foreign countries are kept from dominating the Indian economy by severe restrictions imposed by the Indian government. All foreign

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

	1950	1960	1965–66	1976–77	1978–79
Electric Lamps	14,000,000	48,000,000	72,000,000	162,000,000	180,000,000
Radio Receivers	54,000	282,000	600,000	1,700,000	1,900,000
Bicycles	99,000	1,071,000	1,600,000	2,700,000	3,700,000
Sewing Machines	33,000	303,000	430,000	385,000	197,000
Cars, Jeeps and Land Rovers	16,500	26,600	35,000	44,000	45,600

companies operating in India must allow the government to hold majority controlling interest and they must re-invest some of the profits in India itself.

India can be justly proud of its scientific community which is generally regarded as second only to the United States and Japan.

Standard of Living: In this area Nehru's dream has not been realized. In fact, the Indian government now estimates that nearly half of its 700 million citizens live below the poverty line. The population increases by about 14 million people per year, which cuts into the significant advances in industrial production.

The advances in agricultural production have been brought about largely by introducing new seeds which require heavy doses of fertilizer and adequate water supplies. Only the farmers with capital have been able to widely use these new methods; in the process people have been forced off the land.

There is no doubt that the landless poor are the group in the greatest need in India. With no land in the villages they often migrate to the large cities like Bombay. Five hundred new people enter that city each day only to find few jobs available and practically no housing. Thousands must live in the streets while seeking employment or return to their home villages to work as laborers for other farmers.

There is little new land that can be brought under cultivation and the 14 million new people who join the population each year must be cared for. The net result is a large group of people caught in poverty, with little hope of even the barest minimum standard of living. For this group Nehru's dream of an increased living standard resulting from industrial growth has turned into a nightmare.

NATIONAL INCOME AND POPULATION

	National income (million Rupees)*	Per capita income (Rupees)	Population (millions)
1950–51	167,310	466	359
1960–61	242,500	559	434
1977–78	433,050	690	629
1978–79	452,610	706	641
1979–80	445,800	682	654

*8.5 Rupees equal one U.S. dollar.

All statistics are taken from *Statistical Outline of India, 1980*, Tata Services Limited, Department of Economics and Statistics, Bombay House, Bombay, India, 1980.

Gold in the North

Editors' Introduction: The improvement of agricultural methods and production, a major goal of the Indian government, has encouraged innovations in agriculture, such as the better development of quality seeds and the increased use of fertilizer, pesticides, and modern machinery. These innovations have resulted in a dramatic rise in the amount of grain produced in many parts of India, the so-called Green Revolution. India's production of food grains has risen from 50 million tons in 1950–51 to 133 million tons in 1980.

In some years, however, grain production is set back because of inadequate rainfall. Water has always been a key to India's agriculture. From the time of the Harappan civilization, in 2500 B.C., Indians have harnessed the rivers and dug canals to spread water to arid locations. The Indian government is committed to fostering irrigation projects. Recently a multimillion-dollar project has been proposed to link the waters of the Ganges in the north with those of the Kauveri in the south.

In the following article a journalist describes the effects of an irrigation project in the semidesert area of Rajastan. How might a man-controlled source of water change Indian attitudes toward nature? Will the new seeds, increased water supply, and other innovations make India the master of nature rather than its servant?

NANDARAM STOOD ON the banks of the canal. The green trees rustled above his head, the brown water rustled past his feet. The bajra fields stretched out behind him in the sun, mile upon lush mile, till they reached the horizon. "I have lived here," he

Dom Moraes, "Gold in the North," *Span 11*, no. 1 (January, 1970), pp. 10, 11. Published by the United States Information Service, New Delhi.

said, "all my life." He is nearly 70 now, a hard-bitten, lean man whose face has seen a lot of time and weather. He looked out beyond the water and said, "I was not yet 30 when the canal came. Where all the fields are now, there was nothing. There was only sand, sand and a few bushes."

He touched the water briefly with his eyes. "Our crops never came to much. A little til, a little bajra . . . but we could eat it, and feed our cattle off the waste. Still, every alternate year the rains failed. Then we would take our cattle and drive them up into Bahawalpur state, where there was water. People used to disappear on those trips. When we came back from Bahawalpur, they were not here. We never knew if they had settled somewhere else or if they had died in the desert. But many died in the desert." His eyes filmed over, thinking back to that remote time. "Could we have imagined then, sahib, that this place would ever be as it is now? How could we have imagined it? All our lives we had known nothing but hardship and the sand."

Nandaram and his three sons are among the 175 laborers employed on the Maharajah of Bikaner's farm outside Ganganagar. His eldest son, Ramkumar, is 28, a stalwart young man with a sunny smile. "It was a little more sandy than this when I was a child. But nothing like what my father describes. This greenery, you know, I'm accustomed to it: I can't imagine that this was ever a desert." He cannot imagine the hardships of life before the canal either, for he has never known hardship. Most farm laborers in the area earn between 100 and 300 rupees per month; they have free accommodation, their children attend the farm school, they grow their own vegetables, own their own cattle, and most of them have money in the bank.

Everywhere in the Maharajah's farm one heard the lulling syllables of water. It splashed and lapped from the canal and the tube well, into the green, heavy fields, crumbling brown dykes of earth, slipping between stems. It fertilized orchards as well as fields. Guavas and grapefruit, oranges and sweet limes, peaches and pears: they all flourished on the farm, and a cupboardful of silver cups won at various national agricultural shows testified to their quality. Grain and vegetables and

Farmers irrigating their land in Tamil Nadu state. (United Nations)

cotton flourished too. At the nearby Lyallpur Farm there was the same proliferation of water, and their apricots and peaches had won national awards. It seemed incredible that only a few miles away the yellow scorpions clicked their claws between the dunes.

These two are model farms: but nearly all the farms in the area are prosperous. "Nobody wanted land here before the canal," explained Mr. Sharda, the District Agricultural Officer. "So most cultivators have larger holdings than is usual in India —from 20 to 30 acres. The cultivator produces his own food, he doesn't have many personal expenses—he can probably clear 15,000 rupees, a year, most of which he saves. Ganganagar has more tractors than any other area of comparable size in India. Next year, when the water treaty with Pakistan ends, the canal will receive more water, and the intensity of irrigation will rise from 60 per cent to 80 per cent. So naturally there will be even more prosperity."

But the path to prosperity is not a rapid one. The water needs time to work in, it needs to be aided with plough and fertilizer. The area under wheat in the Ganganagar district in 1930–31 was 68,004 acres. Today it spreads over 152,385 acres. Barley in 1930–31 was limited to 2,437 acres. Today it occupies 65,130 acres. Similarly with oranges, a more recent development. In 1953 the Maharajah's farm produced 2,600 fruit. Last year it produced 65,000. "It in not merely a question of water," said Mr. Sharda. "It's also a question of new techniques and new seed. Take wheat. With the new dwarf seed, the wheat yield per acre has risen from 15 to 25 maunds." He paused. "Soon the canal will reach Jaisalmer. The desert will become a granary."

The remark may not make sense to anyone who has stood amid the corrosive sandhills around Jaisalmer under the full sun of summer: not, at any rate, unless he has also stood at Shivpuri head, with the desert flowering around him. What has already happened at Ganganagar is an index to what could happen in the western Thar. The desert could be made not merely habitable but prosperous. As the concrete snake of the canal crawls further south, the wealthy state that once flourished by the banks of the vanished Saraswati could return.

Water rules our lives, like love. The unborn child crouches for nine months in a sac of water. Grown, he plunges into water, no alien element. He encloses it between stone walls and forces it to turn wheels and illuminate cities. He coaxes it to leap through fountains for his aesthetic pleasure. But he remains its servant. No man can live without water, as no man can live without love.

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Land Consolidation

Editors' Introduction: New seeds and fertilizers are not the whole story of the government's attempt to bring about a revolution in agriculture. Consolidation of landholdings is another important project. Under the British, *zamindars* owned much of the land. Tenant farmers had to pay taxes to the *zamindar*, borrowing when the harvest was poor. As a result, many villagers lived in debt throughout their lives.

In 1950, the *zamindari* system was abolished, and many farmers were given title to the land they worked. For a good many villagers, however, the landholdings were in scattered plots in different parts of the village. The Indian government is working now to consolidate their holdings.

Because relatively few Americans earn their living as farmers, it may be difficult for us to realize how vital land is for the majority of Indians, 80 per cent of whom live in villages and depend on the food grown there. To the Indian villager, land is too important to risk in ventures with unknown results. To many, land consolidation is just such a risky venture.

The following reading describes the consolidation of land in the North Indian Village of Karimpur. The authors, American sociologist-missionaries, made Karimpur their home for forty years. Given the advantages of consolidation, why are the villagers so fearful of it? Who gets the best land?

CONSOLIDATION OF LAND is the most striking innovation we have experienced in Karimpur for many years. In government circles

William and Charlotte Wiser, *Behind Mud Walls, 1930–1960, with a Sequel: The Village in 1970*. Originally published by the California Press; reprinted by permission of the Regents of the University of California.

involved in rural development, it had long been regarded as a necessary step toward increased production; but the implementing of the idea was postponed until 1966. The farmers who heard rumors of it dismissed it as ridiculous. From the youngest to the oldest, they had cultivated land inherited from their forefathers. The fact that their holdings were in small, scattered plots had not disturbed them. Each plot was treasured by the owner and his family. There may have been larger fields in the distant past, but when there were two or more sons, the original field had been divided among them and divided again with each generation.

No one seems able to account for the wide distribution of any one family's plots. Instead of being contiguous, they are more often scattered on two or more sides of the village and separated by plots belonging to other families. To an outsider concerned with progress in agriculture, this was shocking inefficiency. But neither our farmers nor those in villages around us had heard of any different system. To be sure, a son might grumble at having to carry a plough from plot to plot, or at being obligated to hurry from one plot to another while water from the government tube well was his to use. Disputes over the low earth boundaries separating one man's plot from those of his neighbors on all four sides were continually being brought before the land recorder or even to the court. But all of this had been accepted as inevitable.

When word finally came from district headquarters that the government was definitely preparing to send officers to Karimpur to evaluate each man's scattered plots and later to exchange them for one or two larger fields, they were alarmed. How could they entrust their land, their inheritance, to unscrupulous officers like those they had known? They were told that the plan would save a farmer time and labor and would result in greater efficiency. Besides, they were given no choice. It came as an order from the government hierarchy in Lucknow, the state capital, or possibly from Delhi, and no alternative was offered.

In their evening circles, the discussion of consolidation went into the night. The farmers reached the point where they could

A cooperative marketing shed at Faridadbad. (United Nations)

accept the advantages in theory but saw dangers in practice. Their fears were not allayed when the village was invaded by officials, among them men whose tactics they had learned to fear, such as the land recorder. The officer in charge was known as the A.C.O.—the Assistant Consolidation Officer. His superior, the C.O., was located at district headquarters. Housing was demanded for the A.C.O. and any others who chose to live in Karimpur rather than in town. Ten or more clerks had to be given space for their desks and in some cases, living quarters.

The A.C.O. was supposed to evaluate the plots belonging to each man, along with a committee of four or five farmers, so that the farmers might have a voice. But when the A.C.O. found that time was lost waiting for farmers to join him, he worked on it with members of his official staff. This left him with a great deal of power. Decisions were virtually his alone.

Every landowner realized that what he was granted now would be his and his descendant's forever. And because land was his paramount security, he was prepared to pay heavily for land he considered good. It soon became evident that the A.C.O.'s mind could be changed regarding the evaluation of plots and, later, the allocation of a particular field, by a small payment from the villager.

I did not suspect what was happening until there was unprecedented agitation over the sudden transfer of the first A.C.O. Farmers were upset because he went off richer while they were poorer. No one would acknowledge what he had given, and the A.C.O. had no intention of reporting what he had received. When the second A.C.O. came, the farmers knew what was expected of them. No man divulged to his neighbor or to his brother what he was offering. As a result, suspicion between neighbors and even between relatives grew until long-standing relationships were disrupted.

When the third and last A.C.O. announced the final settlement, there was an outburst from those who felt cheated, followed by quarrels throughout the village. Again, when the Consolidation Officer, the A.C.O.'s superior, came from Mainpuri, his visit resembled an auction. Later, a still higher Consolidation Officer came to make the final pronouncement, and again claims and counterclaims were rife. When he left, there was satisfaction among some and distress among others. As happens anywhere in the world, those who already had plenty and were clever were the gainers. Those who had little and did not know how to maneuver were the losers. Appeals and court cases are still going on. However, one can hope that in a few years men will have accepted their allotments, and life will become normal once more.

There is no doubt of the ultimate advantages of con-

solidation, at least for those with large fields. It makes radical improvements possible in agriculture, it is ushering in fundamental changes, and it encourages new investments. I recall the time when a farmer considered long and seriously before investing in a fodder cutter to replace the old, cumbersome chopper. Now it is regarded as an essential piece of equipment. Ten years ago there was the same reluctance to spend cash on a simple thresher. Now nine families own them, and others are prepared to buy when a more efficient machine becomes available. All farmers agree that consolidation has saved them time and labor. And it has helped in irrigation. A man with a large field can afford to install a tube well of his own. He can irrigate his own field without waiting his turn for water from the government tube well and can charge others for water from his. Ten privately owned tube wells have appeared in the past six months, where there was only the one government tube well in 1960. Farmers who now own large fields are beginning to think seriously of tractors. One young man . . . startled the village a few weeks ago when he drove down the lane in a bright new tractor. Another was torn between buying a tractor and installing a tube well. He finally decided in favor of the tube well because the benefits would be immediate. However, he has taken the first steps toward the purchase of a tractor, knowing that he may have to wait as long as two years before he can get one of the particular brand he wants, because of the heavy demand.

The New Temple

Editors' Introduction: Is it possible to have industrialization, mass communication, family planning, advances in education and agriculture, and all the other changes brought about by development and still preserve the traditional values of society? Does a nation necessarily have to chose between being modern and being traditional? The next reading, a short story, shows how the building of a dam affected the life of a small Indian village. How do the different generations react to the dam? What is the relationship between tradition and change in the story?

IT WAS AN old temple, but it had little architectural value. It was just a nondescript wayside shrine that someone had built some two hundred years ago with the grey stones quarried cut of the nearby rocks. . . . Inside the narrow, square sanctum there was a grey stone image of Lord Krishna playing the flute, palely lit by a couple of wicks floating in oil. . . .

The temple had stood through two centuries, an integral part of the lives of the people of dozens of villages for miles around. Married couples came there immediately after the ceremony to seek divine blessings, the childless came to pray for issue, the litigants to ask for the Lord's intercession in their legal affairs. When there was a drought, which was often, when there was an epidemic, which happened every few years, people came here to offer prayers. It was impossible for them to imagine existence without the temple.

K. A. Abbas, "The New Temple," *The Black Sun and Other Stories* (Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1963).

And now, as a climax to a series of events which had stirred the whole countryside, had come the announcement that the temple, their very own temple, was to be no more. It would be razed to the ground and then drowned, deliberately drowned, in a flood that would soon be released on the completion of the dam over there in the mountains.

For the last many years the dam had been rising higher on the horizon of their consciousness. First it was unreal like a dream, a tale one heard of from the magic box which brought the words of the Great Ones in faraway Delhi to the village. Then the younger men from the villages began to leave the valley of their forefathers and to trek up the mountain paths to the place where they were now actually building the gigantic wall of stone and concrete to imprison the waters. From up there the sons had sent home much money—obviously they were earning more than their fathers could have even dreamed of. Also they sent letters which described the work they were doing and the place where they lived, but much of what they wrote, being full of big new words, was incomprehensible to the simple old farmers who had to get them read by school-going sons or by the village teacher himself. Then, whenever they got a holiday, the sons had come home, dressed in clothes which looked suspiciously like army uniforms. The fathers were puzzled, and a wild fear stabbed the hearts of the mothers.

"Son, isn't this army dress you wear?" asked old Parshuram of his son Mangal, a tall and well-built lad who looked even taller in the khaki jacket and narrow trousers he was wearing, and his mother cried out the thought that other mothers were too frightened to utter. "Surely, they are not sending you off to a war?"

And Mangal's strong white teeth flashed in the sunlight as he laughed, "No, no we are not in the army. We bought these second-hand army clothes because they are more convenient for the work we do at the dam. You might say we are fighting a war, but it is a new kind of war.". . .

It all sounded fantastic, maybe the boy was just boasting as boys are wont to do, but as he spoke he looked serious and earnest enough, and it was difficult to disbelieve him. His

mother thought, "My son is doing some work which is fraught with all sorts of dangers, and so it is better to ensure divine protection." She called the boy, "Come, son, let's go to the temple to thank the Lord for your safe return and to pray for your future safety."

Whatever happened, everything seemed to begin and end with a visit to the temple.

And now this temple, the very core of their existence, was to be drowned, deliberately drowned, in a flood that would be unleashed by reckless and ungodly men far up there on the mountain where the dam was. . . .

First they had heard, again from the Magic Box, that on completion of the dam, when the river would be stoppled in the hills, its water would be allowed to fill up the whole valley, and hundreds of villages would have to be evacuated. When they heard it, it seemed to be one of those strange and wonderful and sometimes awesome things that were happening in different parts of the country. They heard about them from the voice out of the Magic Box, but they were as unrelated to their lives as the firing of a cannonball aimed at the moon in far-off *Amereeka*—an action of which the wise ones wagged their hoary heads and muttered, "The sky is the abode of the gods. Only a fool would dare to throw things at the stars and the moon and the sun.". . .

"Nearly three hundred villages in the valley will be evacuated and flooded out to form the vast reservoir, which will be like a new sea." This the voice had spoken, but who could imagine that their own little village would be one of them? Maybe a few had feared such an eventuality, but they had not dared to speak out their premonitions. And then one day the dreadful news came that Chhota Parbatpur was one of those villages which were doomed—"but doomed to create new life for themselves and for millions of their countrymen," the Voice assured them.

For some moments they were stunned, and even the gay lilt of the film songs now emanating from the Magic Box could not console them. But all through the ages, generation after generation, they had been conditioned to bear all manner of

calamities—in never-ending succession they had endured famines, floods, epidemics, even wars, and they had survived. It would not be the first time that their village would be washed away by the angry waters, and this time at least the government was promising them not only land but also money to build new homes in the uplands beyond the reach of the flood.

Soon they were reconciled to their destiny, even old Parshuram, the father of Mangal, who was cursing the day he had allowed his son to go up there to work on the dam. True, the lad was earning a good deal of money and said he had learned to work one of these machines with giant paws that could pick up whole mountains—like the mighty arm of Hanuman the monkey-god. But the boy was obviously spoiled by too many cinema shows he was seeing there in Nangal and had refused to marry the girl his parents had chosen for him. And then the boy had come a few days before the village was to be evacuated and shocked his father with the brazen statement that he had chosen a girl for himself, the daughter of a mechanic who lived in the same tenement. "Gori will be sixteen next month," said the son in a matter-of-fact voice, "and she is now studying in the Fourth Standard in school."

The old man was stunned into speechlessness. Surely the boy must be bewitched to talk of such shameless things in front of his own father.

When he recovered from the shock he spoke to his wife, who was weeping at what seemed to her the utter corruption, even destruction, of her son. "Mother of Mangal, don't weep. What Bhagwan wills shall happen. Keep our food for us. I am taking this boy to the temple to offer prayers. Maybe that will cure him of this city madness that has come over him."

The boy shrugged his broad shoulders. "As you wish—let's go to the temple—for soon even the temple will be no more."

"What ungodly talk is this?" Parshuram sharply remonstrated. "You dare utter such words about the Abode of the Lord?"

"I am just telling you the fact. When all these villages are flooded out, naturally, the temple, too, will be drowned."

Slowly the truth of the matter sank into Parshuram's con-

sciousness. Yes, of course, if the villages, some of which were on the higher ground, would be drowned in the new sea, the temple was in danger, too!

Old Parshuram did not go to the temple—now it was a matter more vital than life itself, it was an issue of Faith. So he went to the *Chaupal* and told of what he had heard to the village Elders.

"Thank the Lord we know it in time," said the whitehaired Hori who was the Sar-panch, the elected Head of the Village Council. With full consciousness of his authority, he said, "We will never allow our temple to be destroyed. The government would have first to kill each of us before anyone dare touch one stone of our sacred shrine."

"But, grandfather," pleaded Mangal, "on the higher land where we build our new village, we can build a new temple. If you like we can carry to the new spot not only the image of the Lord but also the whole structure, stone by stone. It will be the same temple, only in a new place."

Old Hori's voice was compassionate but firm. "Son, you speak without faith and without knowledge of the ways of the Lord. The spot where the temple stands is sacred ground. It was here that the Lord manifested Himself when the image was discovered two hundred years ago. It was a clear sign that that is where He wishes to reside. No one can be allowed to remove the temple, not even the all-powerful government."

"But then," argued Mangal, respectful but obstinate, "all our work on the dam is useless, the crores of rupees spent, the hundreds of lives given, the labor of ten thousand men for ten whole years."

"Be that as it may," retorted Hori, "no one can move the Lord from His abode, only the Lord Himself can shift His residence."

And Mangal was left speechless, pondering the implications of these words.

From Chhota Parbatpur the news spread to the surrounding villages: *the temple is in danger.*

The whole countryside was roused to the defense of Faith: *the temple must be saved.*

Five hundred men and women lay on the ground surrounding the temple in a defiant *satyagraha*. "Only over our dead bodies will anyone remove one stone from the temple," they pledged.

A hysterical old woman kept shouting, "Release all your floodwaters, you evil men, our Lord will push back the waves. Not a drop will touch the temple."

The government officials explained to the villagers the life-giving importance of the dam and this new sea, which would bring prosperity to millions of people like them, but the *satyagrahis* were not convinced. The leaders of the people, belonging to many parties and groups, came and spoke to the people, but their words too were of little avail.

Then the wisest-and-most-beloved-of-all the leaders came and said, "I know that the Lord wants this dam to be built, this sea to be created, even if His house has to be removed. Has he not said so clearly in the Bhagavad Gita: Do thy duty, O Arjuna, and care not for the consequences."

"Then let the Lord give a sign—a sign that we can understand," the villagers said, anxious not to be rude to the wisest-and-most-beloved-of-all, but determined not to yield on the issue of faith.

And that night young Mangal kept thinking of so many things—of the dam, and the face of the girl he was going to marry, and the wise words and worried face of the wisest-and-most-beloved-of-all. He could not sleep, so he thought he would go and pray to the Lord to show a way out of the impasse that threatened to ruin his life and lives of millions like him.

The pale flicker of the wicks floating in oil had softly illuminated the Lord's beautiful face, which seemed to be smiling with a playful curve to the lips, and Mangal thought of the Boy Krishna tending cattle with the cowherds and stealing butter from the milkmaids. And in that moment he sensed that the Lord was saying something to him with His silent lips. Early next morning, when some of the *satyagrahis* opened the door of the temple to perform the morning *puja* [worship], they were aghast to find the familiar image missing.

Someone shouted, "The sign—the Lord has given the sign." And, as the sun came up from behind the eastern hills, another miracle was reported: The image had installed itself on the top of the yonder hill just beyond the area which would be flooded.

When the new temple was completed, it was the same old grey stone shrine around the same grey image, but now it stood on the high bank of the new sea which spread for a hundred miles and would supply life-giving water to millions of acres of thirsty land.

"Isn't our new temple beautiful?" asked Parshuram when he brought his son and daughter-in-law to seek the blessings of the Lord. The old man had ultimately approved of the sixteen-year-old Gori, who had passed her Fourth Standard examination only a few days before her wedding.

She was too shy to reply and only looked at her husband with eyes brimming over with happiness. It was Mangal who spoke, and he said, "Yes, father, our new temple is beautiful." But he was looking out to the miracle of the new sea created by men like him, and beyond it to the dam, that mighty structure he had helped to raise, dedicated to the Glory and Happiness of Man.

Progress and Poverty

Editors' Introduction: In "The New Temple" we saw that simply substituting the new (dam) in place of the old (temple) may not be enough. Tradition exists along with modern innovations. In addition, progress has its price, as Americans are discovering. Factories that produce stereo equipment may pollute rivers. Fancy prepared foods may not be nutritious. Industrialized man is not necessarily better or happier than farming man.

The following selection, composed of three short parts, deals with some of the ambiguities of what we call progress. In the first part, an Indian grandmother talks to her granddaughter, recently returned from the United States; the second part is a poem written in the fifteenth century; the last is from a recent interview with a modern Indian philosopher-poet. Compare America's passion for mobility and exploration with India's "farsightedness." What are your personal goals? America's goals? What happens as we achieve our goals?

"Do you realize that you know nothing of a factor which is vital to the lives of most of your countrymen? Do you always want to see India through the eyes of a visitor? The real Indians are the villagers, the peasants. Poverty and the work on the land is so much a part of their daily living that they must have a tremendous, inclusive faith to make such living possible. If you want to understand these people, you must also understand something of Hinduism. It is the most rigid of beliefs, the most realistic of philosophies, and it determines for them everything from their food to their morals.

"We have been called pacifists," she continued, showing for the only time that I can remember a consciousness of the existence of contemporary politics, "but it is not ignorance that makes us so. We could be the most highly educated country in the world. We have all the prerequisites for intelligent 'political consciousness'—*if that were an end.* But I, for one, can only hope that the religion and philosophy of our people will secure them against civilization and what you call 'progress.' Bless you my child, progress is a convenient term for describing our journey from the great age of India."

If I had at the time been less scared of my grandmother, I would have argued with her about her attitude toward conditions in India, which I thought hopelessly reactionary. Concepts which had always seemed to me self-evident she ignored or nullified with her strange, kindly, patronizing attitude toward "those Indians less fortunate than ourselves." Equality of opportunity? Absurd!

"But I can see that you do not even know what I am talking about. Because we let politics pass us by, because we have evolved no way of writing down our music, because we do not preserve in a concrete form our art and our stories, the West considers that we have lost our culture. But it is in the oral traditions of the villages that the arts of India are really alive. The brief Western immortality of museums is pointless to people who have seen eternity in their earth. In comparison with this the people of the West are short-sighted, are they not?"

"I suppose so."

"And we are long-sighted—which is not the same as being farsighted," she added.*

This "long-sightedness" complicates the question of progress. What of the poverty of the spirit? Who is the pauper in the following poem?

> I dwell content in the hermit's dress of bark
> While you luxuriate in silken splendor.
> Still, my contentment is equal to yours;

* From *Home to India* by Santha Rama Rau, pp. 16–17. Copyright 1944 by Vasanthi Rama Rau. By permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

Disparity's guise is deceiving.
Now let him be called a pauper
Who bears an insatiable greed;
But when a mind rests content,
What can it mean to be "wealthy" or "poor"?*

Of course, India's Five-Year Plans foresee improved sanitation, increased industrialization, production, land reform, and consolidation. But that long-sightedness makes some Indian leaders look beyond these factors. Professor P. Lal discusses this question with an American interviewer, Dr. Donald J. Johnson.

QUESTION: Much of the writing of our own history from Plato on has foreseen or, I suppose, wished for the secular utopia of Plato and Marx and so forth, that one day all the problems would be solved and we could live in a secular utopia. I suppose that's being questioned, now. But in Indian mythology that secular utopia hasn't really existed, has it?

LAL: No, no. You see, the problem of a secular utopia would be that it would have ecological implications. There is no such thing as a secular utopia except in beautifully printed books. Tremendous advancement on the material plane brings with it the kind of repercussions—ecological repercussions—that we don't see. Hinduism, I think, in a curious way, foresees this and stays away from it and finds other releases, not secular. That seems to be what Hinduism is.

Q: That certainly seems to be borne out in our present generation. It is our upper-middle-class kids, who've almost arrived at a secular utopia, that are the very ones who seem to be the most discontent with this.

LAL: In fact, that puzzles Hindus very much. This should have been foreknown long ago. One could have predicted this. The net result of pursuing affluence is that you will be affluent. And then what???

Q: The story of the Buddh who left all that was very much like our suburban kids. . . .

LAL: Yes, very much so.

* Barbara Stoler Miller, *Bhartrihari: Poems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), #177.

Q: In our language, we keep using the word "paradox" as if somehow it shouldn't be. In your own mythology, what we call paradox is considered more or less the normal thing, isn't it?

LAL: Oh, yes, yes. In fact, that's the whole point. Call it whatever you will, ambivalence, dichotomy, paradox—the fact that nothing in this world comes single. Everything is double, and everything has a built-in opposite. This is Hinduism's basic premise. Until one realizes this, one lives in a state of constant wishing, hankering, desiring, with the result—the danger—that the wishes and the hankerings and the desires are granted. That's the tragedy of life.

Q: That's even worse than their not being granted?

LAL: Exactly.

The Prime Minister Sums Up

Editors' Introduction: The interweaving of classical tradition and modern forces is one of the most striking characteristics of India today. In the previous reading an Indian philosopher spoke of paradox—the belief that everything is accompanied by its opposite, including progress and pollution, affluence and discontent.

There is little doubt that India aspires to greater wealth, social justice, and power. Yet even Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is aware of the pitfalls of progress achieved at the expense of human values. In this final selection, Mrs. Gandhi speaks of her concept of progress—what India has achieved and what is yet to come. What does Mrs. Gandhi think of consumerism? Why does she believe in democracy and socialism?

THE OLD RELIGIOUS hostilities and feelings of caste superiority have not yet disappeared and many groups are bent on perpetuating them, but the people as a whole regard them as inimical to the national strength. Our programs for introducing socialism have been opposed at every step by the vested interests and their advocates are now compelled to pay formal allegiance to socialism. These achievements mean as much to us as the fact that the national income has risen from Rs. 86,500 million ($11,892.5 million) to Rs. 358,110 million ($49,235.4 million) in the last twenty to twenty-five years.

There is no need to give this august assembly an account

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Address before the Sri Lanka Assembly at Columbo, April 23, 1973. "World Peace and Progress through Coexistence and Cooperation." Reprinted by permission of the Information Service, Embassy of India, Washington, D.C.

of all that we have been able to do in India over this period. Briefly stated, our food production has doubled—and this has enabled us to withstand drought of unimaginable intensity this year. Our industrial base has become stronger and more versatile. But poverty remains, and far too many people are still denied the minimum constituents of life without hunger and disease. Unemployment, especially among the educated, is a matter for grave concern. There is a sharper awareness and growing impatience with the inequalities. Now that we have some of the economic and organizational means to overcome poverty and inequality, we are more keenly conscious of the urgency of quickening the pace of progress.

It is customary to judge nations by the income figures and the rates of growth. Perhaps I am somewhat old-fashioned in this regard, continuing to attach more importance to the quality of people than to the volume of their possessions. Therefore, in providing our people with the means of satisfaction, we do not want to emulate the acquisitive and consumer societies. The affluent and powerful countries, whatever their political ideology, seem to have the same basic concept of what constitutes a good life. As technology advances, it becomes all the more necessary that we do not become victims of our tools.

We should concern ourselves not only with the material but with the need to evolve a new kind of man, with the wisdom and the understanding to make the best use of technology; a man who can be at peace with himself and with nature. In this quest, countries like India can have a contribution to make by remaining true to the best in their respective heritages.

The nature of relationships within a society is as valid for us as its economic activity. We fought for freedom because of the conviction that no people is entitled to rule over another. How, then, could we acquiesce in any one group dominating another? So we chose democracy, not the restricted form which is no democracy, but a democracy which permits and invites all people to share the responsibility of political decision. With each year and with each election, our people have grown in political maturity and their faith in the parliamentary

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi lays a garland at a picture of Tulsi Das, Hindi poet and translator of the Ramayana. (Information Service of India, New York)

system has deepened. The same faith in the equality of man has prompted us to ensure equal respect and rights for all religions. For democracy to have a meaning and relevance to the lives of our millions, economic opportunity had to be extended to all. Our politics was, therefore, the politics of socialism. By this we do not mean ownership and control of all wealth and the means of production but the widest diffusion, indeed the socialization, of economic opportunity.

In all our countries, the generation which fought for political independence is yielding place to the new generation which, while largely accepting the values of the founding fathers, seems to be more avid for concrete results. To us the choice of democracy evolved from our belief that the means are as important as the ends and that that change is best which is brought about peacefully. This is in consonance with our ancient philosophy and political conditioning. Democracy may seem slow, but it teaches and strengthens as it evolves. . . .